

MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE



Vol. 2

MARCH, 1934

No. 7

A Monthly Review of the Best in Recorded Music

This Issue is Dedicated to the
Memory of One of the Best
Beloved Figures of American
Music

VICTOR HERBERT

1859 - 1924

10¢

Edited by
AXEL B. JOHNSON
and
R. D. DARRELL



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Mozart: Piano Concerto in D minor (K-446), played by Edwin Fischer with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Imported Victor 4 twelve-inch records. Price \$10.00. Available shortly.

The MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE

A Monthly Review of the Best in Recorded Music

AXEL B. JOHNSON, Editor

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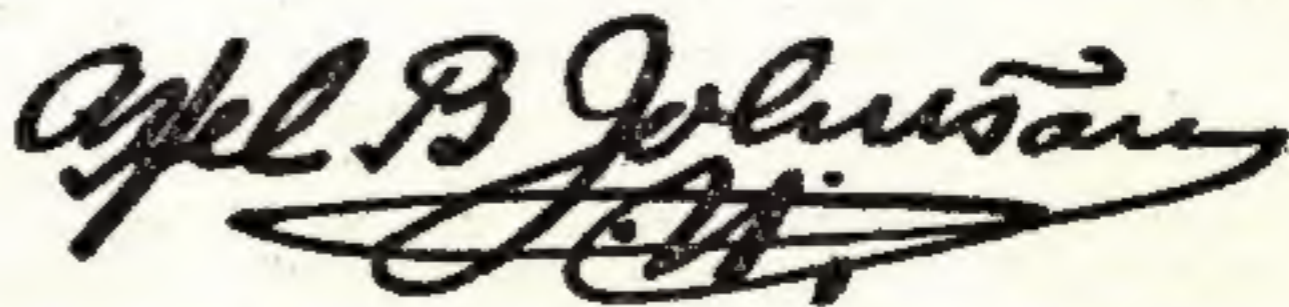
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EDITORIAL

This issue of the MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE is dedicated to the memory of Victor Herbert, America's best loved composer, and one of the world's greatest figures in the field of light operatic music. The tenth anniversary of Victor Herbert's death falls in May, 1934, and it is in connection with this forthcoming anniversary that we commemorate the man and the musician with a special Victor Herbert number of the magazine. The leading article is written by Mr. Nathaniel Shilkret, the noted musical director of the RCA Victor Company and broadcast conductor. Mr. Shilkret, a close friend and admirer of the late composer, has been one of the most active exponents of his works, playing them constantly over the air, and frequently recording them. The two Victor Herbert albums in the Victor catalogue are brilliant tribute to Mr. Shilkret's insight into Herbert's music, and his skill in playing it.

The other Victor Herbert article in this issue was written by another friend of the composer, now himself passed away, the Hon. Standish Willcox, one of the closest of my many friends in Boston, and during his life a prominent figure in local and national politics.

I should like to call our readers' attention to the recent change in the prices of imported records (prophesied some months ago in these columns)—full details of which are given elsewhere in this issue. They also will undoubtedly be interested to know that the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Eugene Ormandy, has recently made a long series of recordings for the Victor Company,*some of which are likely to be released very shortly. In addition to the ROUMANIAN RHAPSODY of Enesco, mentioned last month, Mr. Ormandy has also conducted recorded performances of John Alden Carpenter's ADVENTURES IN A PERAMBULATOR, Schönberg's VERKLAERTE NACHT, Rachmaninoff's Second Symphony, and several smaller works by Percy Grainger and others.



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Victor Herbert

1859 - 1924

BY NATHANIEL SHILKRET

EDITOR'S NOTE: As a close friend of the late composer, and a keen student and frequent conductor of his works, Mr. Shilkret is an ideal person to write the leading article for this special Herbert number of the MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE—commemorating the tenth anniversary of Victor Herbert's death. Mr. Shilkret's long acquaintance with Herbert, and his insight into his music attained through many years of study and performances on records and in broadcasts, enables him to give a new understanding of the late composer's personality and music to those unaware or unappreciative of Herbert's true significance in the field of American music—a composer whose works and individuality established him as one of the outstanding figures in the music and musical life of this country.

* * *

A composer rich in heritage of folk lore and a vast imaginative power can wield his art to great proportions.

Hearing Victor Herbert's compositions one cannot help but feel the influence of his grandfather, Samuel Lover, novelist, playwright, and composer of Irish songs.

Let us go further in examining Herbert's background, the most important being the home of Samuel Lover, the meeting place of celebrated artists—readings, music, Irish folk lore, which his grandfather knew so well. Then Germany, where he studied with the famous 'cellist, Professor Bernhardt Cora-mann. For four years he played engagements with all the famous orchestras in Germany, Italy, and France—finally landing in Vienna as 'cello soloist in the famous Strauss orchestra. It was in these years that he played with, and heard them play, the greatest—among them Liszt, Rubinstein, Brahms, and Max Seifritz, friend of Wagner. It was a remarkable period in music, and Victor Herbert with his fine and sensitive nature absorbed it with the capacity of a genius.

In 1886 Herbert came to New York to join the Metropolitan Opera House Orchestra as solo 'cellist and assistant conductor under Anton Seidl. He was then twenty-seven years old.

Before telling of his American career, let me interrupt by saying that he was a pianist besides being a 'cellist. Like most composers who are anxious to gain an intimate knowledge of the various instruments, he had in his time studied many instruments. Two stories bring out his knowledge of the trombone and piccolo. No less an authority than Herr Seifritz claims that Herbert studied the trombone just to be able to play in the orchestra when Wagner arranged a perform-

ance of *The Flying Dutchman*. Another story states that his initiation into the musical world started with the small but conspicuous sounding piccolo, when he was still a school boy. His mother, then impressed with the beautiful playing of Piatti, the famous 'cellist, insisted that if young Herbert must be a musician that he study the violoncello. After one concert as a solo piccolo player, when little Herbert became nervous and his lips refused to be controlled, he was convinced that his mother was right.

Let us resume Herbert's American career. In almost rapid succession came Theodore Thomas' orchestra as assistant conductor and solo 'cellist. During these years in the American orchestras Herbert's imagination had produced some worthwhile compositions. His concerto and suite for violoncello were written while with Seidl, and his second concerto in E minor was dedicated to the Philharmonic Society.

To show what remarkable experience this great musician had, we find that from 1894 to 1898 he was bandmaster of the 22nd Regiment of the National Guard of the State of New York. In the Spring of 1894, when Herbert was thirty-five years old, came the turning point of his life. He was induced to write a light opera. This was soon ready under the title of *Prince Ananias*, and was the beginning of the operas of America's light opera composer.

During his conductorship of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, which lasted two years—1903 and 1904—he wrote compositions in symphonic forms, naturally being influenced by the fact that an immediate performance under his own directorship was certain. After the 1904 season, Herbert decided to devote more of his time to composition. In some future issue I will, if I am permitted, go into detail about his numerous operas, symphonic works, operettas, and other compositions. What I want to write about now is Herbert, the man, the musician, and the love of those who had the opportunity to meet him.

He was a meticulous worker. His scores (as a rule, two of each composition) were given to the publisher carefully written and corrected by himself. This required a rare musician and a perfect orchestrator, but, above all, a regard for the comfort of others. His publishers point with pride to Herbert's scores, which made it so easy for them, in comparison with the careless work of others. He not only produced a clearly written score of an opera, but another complete score for their files.

(Concluded on page 208)

A Tribute to the Life and Character of the Great Composer - Victor Herbert

By STANDISH WILLCOX

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following heartfelt tribute to and appreciation of the life and character of Victor Herbert is taken from an article on a Victor Herbert Festival in Boston, published in the special Herbert issue of the *Phonograph Monthly Review*, January 1930. Its author is the late Hon. Standish Willcox, then Editor of the Statistics Department, City of Boston, Secretary and close personal friend of Mayor Curley, and a prominent and significant figure in both city and national politics. Mr. Willcox was one of the most congenial and gifted men in the social and political life of Boston. It was a genuine privilege to be counted among his close friends, and during the many years I knew Mr. Willcox, I found him always one of the most considerate, kindly, and brilliant men I had ever known, gifted with a remarkable mind and most sympathetic personality, truly one of the most distinguished and beloved figures in the life of his community, and widely known and esteemed outside the city. It was with the keenest sense of personal loss that I was informed of Mr. Willcox's sudden death a little over a year ago, for though I had not had the pleasure of seeing him since I left Boston, I still remembered vividly his magnetic personality, his brilliant conversation, and his many generous and thoughtful deeds. In devoting a special number of the MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE to the memory of Victor Herbert, I feel that we can pay no more touching and fitting tribute to the late composer's life and character than by publishing again the sincere appreciation penned by the late and lamented Hon. Standish Willcox.

* * *

Victor Herbert, 'cello virtuoso, conductor, composer, and delightful companion, has been dead but nearly ten years, yet in that time his name and his melodies have become better known to more Americans than has the name or the melodies of any other contemporary composer.

Today one can think of no name in the wide field of art and music that is more familiar than that of Victor Herbert. For years there has been no national composer in this country whose fame has approached that of Victor Herbert.

It so happened that the tremendous popularity of the radio began to reach its peak just at the time of this beloved composer's death. Since then his name and compositions daily have been brought to the delighted notice of people in every nook and corner of the American continent.

As a writer of the kind of music that appeals instantly to every heart, tutored or untutored in the art, Victor Herbert remains unrivalled in this country, and the probabilities are that he will occupy this unique position indefinitely.

* * *

Victor Herbert was born in Dublin, Ireland, February 1, 1859. His grandfather was none other than the illustrious painter, author, poet, and composer, Samuel Lover, whose most familiar works to Americans are the stories, *Handy Andy* and *Rory O'More*, and the little song classic, *The Low Backed Car*.

At an early age, Herbert lost his father and was sent to Germany to study music. Here it was that he became master of the 'cello and wrote several notable compositions for that instrument. To the end he remained a 'cello virtuoso of the first rank and for many years critics maintained that there were none his superior in this respect.

In Vienna in 1886, he met and married Therèse Foerster, a prima donna, then enjoying the greatest favor in that city. The same year, thanks to their "discovery" by Frank Damrosch, then on a European tour, the newly married couple came to the United States. With characteristic determination, Victor Herbert at once took out naturalization papers, and thus was the first step taken in making one of the most loved and distinguished citizens the United States of America has ever welcomed.

For several years after this Victor Herbert repeated his European successes in this country by appearing as a 'cello soloist with the Theodore Thomas and Anton Seidl orchestras at many important concerts. Presently he took up the conductors baton, immediately proving himself splendidly equipped as a real leader of the orchestra,—in personality, ideas, musical scholarship, and in emotional power and interpretative ability. He became bandmaster of the famous Gilmore 22nd Regiment of New York, and thereafter conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Eventually he organized and conducted for many years his own permanent orchestra in New York City.

But, after all, these manifold activities and successes, enough to insure lasting fame to any one individual, are all overshadowed by Victor Herbert's extraordinary and uninterrupted success as a composer of music. It is in this capacity that he is best and most generally remembered, and it is as a composer that his claim to lasting fame is justified. Moreover, although he

wrote many compositions for the 'cello, for orchestra, for the piano, and individual vocal numbers, it is as a composer of what are most aptly described as *opéras comiques*, or light operas, that Victor Herbert stands out pre-eminent and unapproached, both in the remarkable quality of his work and the abundant evidence it affords of his unbounded versatility.

His first light opera, written in 1894, for the then famous Bostonians, was *Prince Ananias*. It was immediately successful and proved the turning point in Victor Herbert's career. From that time until his death he was always busy scoring a new light opera, often being engaged in the composition of two or more works simultaneously. Indeed, there was one memorable year, 1905, immediately after the tremendous success of *Mlle. Modiste*, when the privileged visitor to his studio in New York was astounded to find the composer busy with the scores of no less than four different operas—all entirely opposed in theme and atmosphere, and all subsequently produced the same season in four different metropolitan theatres.

Spread out on specially designed desks or easels were the different and intricate scores, and Victor Herbert apparently thought nothing of turning from one to the other as he wrote in the countless notes of his rich and colorful harmonies, never for a moment allowing the atmosphere and requirements of one to interfere with those of another! It was a feat that has probably never been equalled by any other composer. In other separate years he produced from his active brain as many as three different operas.

Nearly fifty light opera scores remain as his monument and his gift to the American people and the world generally. That the United States is appreciative of his gift is indicated by the enthusiastic support that has been given to the many revivals of his best works, and the Victor Herbert festivals given in recent years in New York and Boston.

* * *

When the City of Boston extended a greeting to Victor Herbert, in the form of a municipal luncheon tendered him at the Elk's Club, I had the honor to serve as chairman of the local committee.

No man can ever forget the marvelous personality of Victor Herbert, the cordiality of his greeting, the sincere character of the man, his high consideration and effective aid to the little bands of men and women who stood upon the threshold of their musical careers, or his modest and unassuming life.

Mr. Herbert charmed a representative company of Boston citizens, embracing every profession, by the force of his eloquence and his love for his fellow man.

* * *

Victor Herbert passed into the eternal light on May 26, 1924.

He will ever be remembered as a man among men.

I loved him for his untiring devotion to his friends, for his high sense of rectitude and honor, for his tender care of those within the shadow of adversity, for his strength of purpose and kindness of spirit, for his devotion to that beautiful faith of unnumbered ages founded upon the rock of Peter, for constant consideration of the welfare and happiness of those who surrounded him as companions—these were the attributes of his daily life.

Victor Herbert died as he had lived in the serenity of love and faith.

The passing of my dear friend has always reminded me of the last hour of the dying regicide of France, for whom Cardinal Richelieu served as religious counselor.

The aged monarch requested that the shutters might be raised, that he might see for the last time the opulent sunlight of Almighty God as it flooded the palace garden of Versailles.

Turning to Cardinal Richelieu, the dying ruler said:—"My Brother, death is but the sleep of evening which briefly awaits the dawn of the eternal morning."

*I know thou art gone to the home of thy rest,
Then why should my soul be so sad?*

*I know thou art gone where the weary are
blest,*

And the mourner looks up and is glad;

*I know thou hast drunk of the Lethe that
flows*

In a land where they do not forget,

That sheds over memory only repose,

And takes from it only regret.

INCREASED SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Due to rapidly mounting costs, The Music Lovers' Guide Publishing Co. finds it absolutely necessary to raise the present subscription rates of the **MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE**.

Effective May 1, 1934, the yearly subscription rate in the United States will be \$1.50; in Canada \$2.50; in other foreign countries \$2.00.

Single copies will be 15c each.

Subscriptions and renewals sent in before May 1, 1934, will be entered at the present rates. The announcement of increased rates is made well in advance so that our readers may take advantage of the present rates before the increase goes into effect.

An Extensive Disc Edition of "Der Rosenkavalier"

BY DR. J. E. S. VOJAN

"The Rose-Bearer," so far the most popular opera of Richard Strauss, is now in the hands of all phonophiles in a practically complete form. Lotte Lehmann, Maria Olszewska, Elisabeth Schumann, Richard Mayr in the roles of the Marschallin, Quinquin, Sophia, and Baron Ochs, and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under Robert Heger, have given us thirteen records which contain all the most important pages of the glorious score. I like "Der Rosenkavalier" because it is so natural and human. And the score is permeated by a warmth which is not always the first virtue of Strauss works. This Marshallin who in her last love affair bids the Cupido farewell and in the finale of the first act fills the stage with her deep resignation has in Lotte Lehmann a wonderful interpreter—so far she is the best Bichette I have seen. (Bichette means "the darling," so Octavian calls her. Believe it or not, a *prima donna* of a German Court Theatre returned this role to Herr Intendant asking to be excused from appearing in this "ambiguous atmosphere"). Olszewska is a charming Octavian, with the true touch of youthful heartlessness. I see her before me as I heard her, and therefore forgive her a few instances of carelessness during the recording. Schumann is an ideal Sophie, Mayr as Ochs is phenomenal. Heger conducts his orchestra superbly, and the recording is very good. What else may we wish?

The origin of this opera was unusual. Hugo von Hofmannsthal discussed the *dramatis personae* with his friend, Count Harry Kessler, at Weimar. He took the list written on the back of a menu card to Berlin. In the last days of March, 1909, he submitted the ideas to Richard Strauss who at once liked it. He said: "We will make it. We will produce it, and people will say that a general expectation has once more ended in disappointment, that this is absolutely not the comic opera which the German public has desired to get for decades. And with this commentary the opera will be a failure. But we will be amused when working on it. Go home and send me the first act as soon as possible." A letter from Garmisch, May 4, 1909, acknowledges the receipt of the libretto. On May 16th Strauss wrote: "My work flows like the Loischach." On May 2, 1910, Strauss notified his friend that he had started the third act. On January 26, 1911, the first performance took place in Dresden.

Smetana declared at the banquet held on May 5, 1882, after the 100th performance of "The Bartered Bride" by the Arts Club in Prague that he wanted to write something that would surpass the idol of the sixties, Offenbach. In the same way Strauss said

to Oskar Bie: "Ich mach halt jetzt an Operett" (Viennese dialect, in German: "Well, I am now making an operetta"). In both cases it only meant that these geniuses deeply longed for a light masterpiece full of gayety and melody, for an outburst of Mozartean divine atmosphere. Both succeeded wonderfully, and gratefully Smetana bows to the composer of the "Marriage of Figaro" in the overture to "The Bartered Bride," Strauss in the enchanting duet of the third act of "Der Rosenkavalier." The beautiful waltz movements are no anachronisms—Strauss simply no more wanted to bind himself to an old style, to the real Vienna of 1740, than Wagner wanted to be bound by the old style in his "Meistersingers." And if I mention Smetana here, I do it, because Strauss told his friends in Prague twenty years ago that according to a family tradition his forefathers emigrated from northern Bohemia to Frankenstein in the Upper Palatinate.

The Victor recording contains the following parts of the score (first German vocal score, Adolph Fuerstner, Berlin, 1910):

ACT I. Side 1. Vocal score, page 5-9 (Nos. 1-13).

Side 2. Page 9-16 (Nos. 14-30).

Side 3. Page 16-24 (Nos. 30-53).

Side 4. Page 24-33 (Nos. 54-76).

Side 5. Page 36-45 (Nos. 85-107). The missing pages 33-36 see Parlophone E 10864 (record sung by Seinemeyer, Stuenzer and List).

Side 6. Page 64-70 (Nos. 143-157), a cut, then page 86-93 (Nos. 195-212). The aria of the Italian singer, omitted here, see Odeon L-80962, a Tauber record.

Side 7. Page 123-129 (Nos. 269-283).

Side 8. Page 129-132 (Nos. 283-290), a cut, page 135-136 (Nos. 298-300), a cut, page 139-143 (Nos. 309-314). Twenty missing measures (Nos. 300, 301, 302, 306) are in Lehmann's Parlophone record R-20054, "Die Zeit, die ist ein sonderbar Ding."

Side 9. Page 142-148 (Nos. 314-327).

Side 10. Page 148-150 (Nos. 327-333), then No. 335 on page 151, again a small cut and pages 153-154 (Nos. 338-342), end of the first act.

ACT II. Side 11 starts with the page 159 and continues to page 168 (Nos. 9-25). The "Presentation March," not in the opera, but arranged for the Film Orchestral Version performed in London, April 12, 1926, is on H. M. V. D-1097.

Side 12. Page 168-172 (Nos. 25-32).

Side 13. Page 172-178 (Nos. 32-45), a cut, page 183-184 (Nos. 58-61).

(Concluded on page 208)

— Speaking of Jazz . . . ! —

A Free Fantasia with Ragtime Obbligato

BY JAMES HADLEY

(Continued from the February Issue)

Typical jazz music would seem to consist of "split" tune, a bass-drum note on every beat, a banjo to mark the rhythm with additional force, and saxophones . . . presenting no great future promise for use in serious musical thought. What is it more or less than a particular orchestral color and treatment, used in conjunction with peculiar altered chords—a simultaneous use of minor and major modes, technically identified as "blues"?

The very word "blues" evokes a host of doleful memories. Is it in human nature to cheerfully endure the dead, melancholy drone of the average "blue" song? I have no especial grudge against "blues" in general . . . it is just the dreary stuff that they represent. Miss Morgan sings "blues," it is true, but she is mercifully far removed from "crooning" and the variety of degenerate, quarter-voice vocalism that it engenders.

This style of "moaning" has been started by some performers with meagre tonal equipment—expediently for themselves. There are few things worse than the tired, pitiful mewing in which a certain famous "crooner" vocalizes his amorous lay; a rank affectation that must sicken the ears of every intelligent music-lover. Here, in all their perfection, we find those false divisions, those whining slurs, which are now sold so dear by radio songsters, though every jackal in India delivers them gratis to his customers all night, and sometimes gets shot for them—and always deserves it.

I never hear the word "blues," by the way, without experiencing a very strong and personal resentment against Miss Helen Morgan, our best little piano-sitter and handkerchief-twister. This young lady is a perpetual source of irritation to me by reason of the trash that she elects to sing . . . her wistful and postery charm is wasted upon these musical futilities. Heavens! how tiresome are these "blues" . . . it surely is possible to more worthily voice the mood of disappointed love.

There is a little song which has been given world-wide fame by the sweetest singer of her time—the little song which is called "*Si vous n'avez rien à me dire*."

It is the eternal heart-cry of the one betrayed, and just so vague and so intense is the reproach of the song:—

"If you had never cared—
had never meant,
why then . . . ?"

I have no idea of the status of Miss Morgan's French, but a translation of the lyric

could easily be made. No song ever written is better suited to her very individual talent, and I wish that she might be induced to do it.

I understand that this number (95036), sung by Madame Adelina Patti, and recorded years ago for the Victor Company, is now available in a series of special re-pressings. Such a gesture is memorable, including in its scope such voices as those of Eames, Calvé, Melba, Plancon and other stars in the "golden era" of song. Such discs belong with the rarities of music-possessions which have no special place in the mere museum, it may be, but which assuredly belong with those things which excite the fancy and the desire of true connoisseurs in the arts.

* * *

As for jazz opera—there is only one musico-dramatic work which really deserves such a title: "Jonny Spielt Auf!" "Jonny Steps Out" is the only translation that would be veracious in its implications. Krenek's opera—so called—aroused some amusement and considerable trepidation by its syncopated cavortings in the modern idiom of jazz. The composer tells us that the only modern music with elemental humanity and the spirit of our time in it is our jazz. It would certainly be interesting to learn if jazz is really a product of the nervous condition of our time. There is small doubt that during the period of the World War there was a search after new and strange methods of expression. "Jonny Spielt Auf" is usually described as a "jazz" opera, but, for the most part, jazz forms only a mild undercurrent, and is generally hinted at by means of rhythmic devices without recourse to typical jazz melody. Krenek was the first composer to employ American dance forms in an opera. The score is said to be dominated by jazz, but as far as I can see there is but one number which is really jazz—an attractive "blues," "*Leb' wohl, mein Schatz, ich geh'*." This, and a "Triumphal Song" of considerable originality are the high spots of the score. Both of these songs are given in fine style by the baritone, Ludwig Hoffmann (O-6565). The same two numbers are played with enthusiasm by Paul Romby and his Band (PD-19808). Lastly, but far from "leastly," there must be mentioned a Fantasy in two parts, on a 12-inch disc, played by Dajos Bela and his orchestra (O-3259). This deserves a special word of approval . . . it is one of the finest things of its kind that I have ever heard. The most attractive bits from the opera are included in this Fantasy, and the performance is perfection.

Considered as an opera—a music-drama, on no matter how small a scale—"Jonny" is a jumble, and not a successful one, at that. Despite the inclusion of the cinema, broadcasting, loud-speakers, the fox-trot, exoticism, revues, luxurious hotels and express trains, Krenek is far removed from anything approaching the proclamation of a new art . . . his "opera" alternated in rapid succession from a serious musico-dramatic form, through whirling musical comedy, to sheer burlesque. What "Johnny" really is, the critics will have to decide.

In its Parisian première at the Theater des Champs Elysées, "Jonny Spielt Auf," heralded as a true jazz opera, scored no kind of a success. There was almost no jazz at all, and very little of anything else, except much purposeless noise. The bored French audience observed that it was merely dissonant, and, what was worst of all, dull. Paris has become sufficiently Americanized to recognize the difference between an augmented seventh and a true blue.

Meanwhile, as an eloquent idiom for operatic expression jazz still awaits convincing demonstration. I hope that the name of Ferde Grofe will always be kept prominently to the fore whenever jazz is mentioned. He has a talent for orchestrating which amounts to real genius. Mr. Grofe first came into the spot-light with his arrangements of popular music back in the early days of jazz. It may be observed that the mode of expression almost invariably far transcended the medium. His arrangement of Gershwin's famous "Rhapsody in Blue" was so striking that no other arrangement of that jazz symphony has ever been published. Recently Mr. Grofe has distinguished himself anew as guest-conductor of the famous Capitol Grand orchestra of sixty-five musicians. In his well-known "Grand Canyon" suite he let loose a loud and effectively scored thunder storm which should be ranked among the authentic electrical disturbances of musical history. It has always been a matter of much interest to me to compare the way in which the same subject has been treated by different composers. Take, for instance, the musical representation of a storm. We find it in Handel's "Riccardo Primo" and "Semele"; in Haydn's "Seasons," Gluck's "Iphigénie en Tauride"; Mozart's "Idomeneo"; Beethoven's "Pastoral Symphony"; Rossini's overture to "William Tell"; Wagner's "Flying Dutchman," and in the "Walküre" Prelude; Berlioz's "Symphonic Fantastique," Halévy's "L'Eclair," and every opera-goer recalls the lightning and thunder of the hurricane in the opening measures of Verdi's lyric drama, "Otello".

Decidedly, Mr. Grofe is in distinguished company.

INTERMEZZO

As for rag-time . . . well, if you are after definitions, there are half a dozen that you can have, and little said when all is done. One could mention the misplaced accent, the emphasis upon the odd beat . . . heavens!

the list would be interminable. Strictly speaking, to "rag a tune means that you destroy its rhythm and tempo, and substitute a 2-4 or 4-4 time and a syncopated rhythm. Briefly, Ragtime is syncopation: the *Habanera* from "Carmen" is the best and most beautiful example of rag-time to be found in modern music. And—since we are speaking of Bizet's opera, after seeing a huge illustrated page carrying the portraits of two dozen or more Carmens, I think that there surely ought to be a law to keep roses out of sets of big, bad teeth. Ragtime in its worthiest manifestation is represented—blazingly—by Irving Berlin's "Alexander's Ragtime Band", the most notable example of intoxicating rhythm that American music can show. At a certain memorable concert, that famous artist of unpredictable moods, Madame Eva Gauthier, proffered arresting interpretations of modern American music. The singer's projection of "Alexander's Ragtime Band" was electrical. In the future, something will really have to be done to alleviate the effect of this rhythm upon a sensitive audience.

Hardly less wonderful is Zez Confrey's "Kitten on the Keys". If it is not recognized as a classic it ought to be. I have that marvellous 10-inch Brunswick record of the "Kitten" played by the gifted Zez himself. In fact, I possess four of them. I am not sure that it is an electric recording, and I am losing no sleep over the possibility, one way or another. For the apotheosis of ragtime—ragtime raised to the Nth degree, commend me to the one and only syncopated kitten. I hear of various "arrangements" and "paraphrases", but I positively refuse to surrender or discard any one of my four treasures until I become convinced that I can obtain something better. A bird on the hat is worth any number of fine songsters further up the state. Ragtime seems to have left but a faint impression upon our present day composers. In his "Ragtime" (it is to be had on disc GD-1063) Stravinsky appears to be oddly uncertain of what he is trying to do. The piece has vigor and snap—in a way—but the progress is labored—it has as little spontaneity as the carefully calculated insanities of the Marx Brothers; and it apparently lasts forever. "Ragtime" is a fearful bore when you study it carefully, although Madame Marcelle Meyer really makes it sound like something. The lady has much pianistic "it". "Ragtime" is many leagues removed from the inimitable drolleries of "Petrouchka", or the glowing plumage of the matchless "Firebird".

It is not surprising that French composers with their effervescent temperament, have done some notable things conceived in the spirit of ragtime. I single out for especial approval Debussy's captivating "Golliwog's Cake-Walk", whose elfin humor is irresistible. A work of larger dimensions is his "Rhapsody for Orchestra and Saxophone" (V-W, 1027, imported). In this composition we perceive considerably more than a hint of the jazz idiom. In the orchestral accompaniment

of the opening subject for violins the syncopation is a prominent feature, and the rag-time rhythm is strongly marked in many phrases of the solo instrument. As played by M. Viard, the saxophone assumes a position of artistic beauty and importance.

The saxophone is seldom heard of in modern orchestration. Isolated examples are the famous saxophone-clarinet duet in Bizet's "L'Arlesienne"; D'Indy wrote his "Choral varié" for saxophone solo and orchestra. It is the solo instrument for the ghost scene in Ambroise Thomas' "Hamlet"; Charpentier has used it more than a few times, so did Richard Strauss in his "Sinfonia Domestica". Meyerbeer's employment of the saxophone is quoted in all works upon orchestration. Decidedly the saxophone, with its rich timbre, is not an inferior instrument. Its employment for bass uses in the jazz orchestra is responsible for its being a legitimate target for ridicule and contemptuous patronage. It is true, however, that it has been used to secure special effects rather than to become a part of the general melodic scheme. The saxophone, being essentially a band, and not an orchestral instrument, there is no saxophone "section" in any orchestra I ever heard of, either here or in Europe. When needed for particular numbers, the "Arlesienne" suite of Bizet, for instance, its music is usually played by one of the clarinetists.

* * *

In the eight years that have elapsed since Mr. Whiteman's first experiment in what he hardly characterizes as Modern American music, one development is evident—the increasing ambition of Mr. Gershwin and other composers of "Modern American Music" to express themselves in the larger musical forms. Therefore, instead of short pieces which had ravished the ears of jazz addicts upon that memorable occasion back in 1924, we listen to Concertos, Suites and Rhapsodies. It is unfortunate that attempts have been made to cast distinctly jazz music into the moulds of classical forms. If jazz is to be listened to as music, it must evolve its own forms, but I vastly prefer the original, spontaneous, swaggering, slap-dash jazz, with its naive conveyance of elemental emotions to the highly artificial machine-made "Rhapsodies" and "Concertos" which the always gullible public acclaim as an ultimate achievement and substitute for the older and better known variety.

Furthermore, we must reject the theory that jazzing the classics "keeps the old stuff alive," or ever developed in the listener a desire to hear such mutilated compositions in their original forms. It is, however, possible that a jazzomaniac may be reclaimed from utter musical ruin, but in one way only. Since he is pleasurably stimulated by highly seasoned musical fare, let him seek the compositions of those whose distinction resides in novel and sensationally brilliant orchestration, strongly marked rhythms or melodies of an exotic flavor. He should certainly

be able to tonally approximate any and every mood in the inexhaustible field of concert and opera—it is not necessary to rummage about in the trash-baskets of music. I suggest that he experiment at first with the March, and Polovetski dances from Borodine's "Prince Igor" . . . here is barbaric splendor and an exciting tempo. Even more so is the "Scheherazade" Suite as directed by Stokowski, (V. M. M. Album Set No. M-23). Even the most hardened jazz addict will find much to astonish him in the final movement, the "Fete at Bagdad and the wrecking of the Ship." Stokowski has accomplished wonderful things in his reading of this movement—here there is a glow of color and a largeness of dramatic utterance that proclaims him of the line royal. It is possible that the "Tale of the Kalendar Prince" may be a trifle beyond our seeker after musical salvation. Later, if all goes well, he may be able to enjoy the voluptuously lovely "Young Prince and the Young Princess," the third movement of the Suite. When our pilgrim attains this stage, however, let him turn to the recording by the Paris Conservatory Orchestra under Philippe Gaubert (C. M. Album Set No. 136); in point of all-around perfection I have never found any interpretation that approached this.

Apropos . . . I am unable to explain certain surprising "cuts" that have been decided upon by the Victor Company or its contributing artists. Especially do I regret the excision of more than ten pages of the "Scheherazade" score—from page 138 to page 149, in the third movement, the most beautiful portion of the entire work. The magnificence of Stokowski's final movement fails to reconcile me to the inexcusable and inartistic mutilation that I have mentioned.

Again, if our former jazz-lover is especially attracted by weird and supernatural effects in music, I recommend the "Infernal Dance of King Kastchel and his Subjects" from Stravinsky's "Firebird" suite, (Victor Album M-53). This wild *bacchanale* of evil spirits and monsters will show him the difference between dramatic sonority masterfully conceived, and mere noise without rhyme or reason.

It is urged, and not without reason, that rhythm, the very life-blood of music, is the backbone of jazz. Well and good: Stravinsky took music the last step back into an organized equivalent of barbaric ritual. In his "Sacre du Printemps," rhythm intensified by mass harmonic resonance is the only authentic musical impulse left. Such music might fittingly describe prehistoric monsters battling in the primeval slime. As a matter of fact, it is an evocation, in modernist idiom, of folk rites of Pagan Russia. It deals with the coming of Spring, the barbaric festival of the adoration of the earth and propitiatory human sacrifice. Certainly it is, if nothing else, the most sheerly exciting piece of music ever written.

(To be continued)

Living American Composers

A List with Notes on the Recordings or Recording Possibilities

Compiled by R. D. DARRELL

(Continued from the February issue)

The preface to this "list with notes on the recordings or recording possibilities" was published in the January 1934 issue of the *MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE*, together with notes on the composers from Achron to Ellington inclusive. The February installment covered the composers from Elwell to Loeffler, and the following pages take up the list from Lieurance on. A number of omissions have been called to my attention: some of these were unintentional, some intentional. As noted in the preface it is obviously impossible to include *all* living American composers. Those intentionally omitted include those who have composed mostly in the smaller forms—particularly songs—even although their works are widely performed and not infrequently recorded, e. g., Oley Speaks, Clayton Johns, Bainbridge Crist, Charles Gilbert Spross, Lily Strickland, etc. Others excluded are older men, no longer active as composers, or at least no longer figuring prominently on current programs, e. g., Philip Greeley Clapp, etc.

An unintentional omission was that of Cecil Burleigh, a conservative but able composer, whose music for all its MacDowellian echoes, is well-knit and effective. I have not noticed any recordings of Burleigh's works, but a note in Mrs. Reis' catalogue, *American Composers—A Record of Works Written Between 1912 and 1932*, indicates that some recordings have been made.

Mention of the Reis catalogue should have been made in the preface to this series. Tardy acknowledgments are now made to it. First issued in 1930, a revised edition was published in 1932, and presumably a new edition will appear before long. Mrs. Reis' concise but meaty foreword, and the thorough lists of works and performances (with notes on the publishers, the performing time, the composers' careers, etc.) make this booklet of uncommon value to anyone interested in American composers and their work, and quite indispensable to conductors, program makers, recording or broadcasting repertory directors. It is published by the United Section of the International Society for Contemporary Music, New York City.

In going through this booklet I notice the names of several composers omitted in my lists: Paul Hastings Allen, Ernst Bacon, Samuel L. M. Harlow, Hans Barth, Evelyn Berckman, Franz C. Bornschein, George Frederick Boyle, Robert Braine, Gena Branscombe, Carl Ernest Bricken, Ernest T. Car-

ter, Theodore Ward Chanler, Rosseter Gleason Cole, Bainbridge Crist, Robert Mills Delaney, Richard Donovan, Albert Israel Elkus, Carl Eppert, Florence Galajikian, Paolo Gallico, Vittorio Giannini, Richard Hammond, Sandor Harmati, Walter Helfter, James Heller, Hans Levy Heniot, Herbert Reynolds Inch, Dorothy James, Boris Koutzen, Edward Frampton Kurtz, Allen Lincoln Langley, Wesley La Violette, Otto Luening, Leopold Damrosch Mannes, Franklin P. Patterson, Edward Royce, Theodore Stearns, Donald Nicholas Tweedy, Max Eald, Powell Weaver, and Hermann Hans Wetzler.

A note in the catalogue, under Joseph Achron, indicates that recordings were made of this composer's *Golem* suite. These may have been privately made; I have not seen them listed in any American or European catalogue.

Additions to earlier lists: A number of Grainger's smaller works, already recorded in other versions, have recently been recorded by the Minneapolis Symphony for Victor (not yet announced for release). Roy Harris' piano sonata was privately recorded by Harry Cumpson, and there are rumors that his powerful *Symphony 1933* was recorded for possible commercial release.

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LIEURANCE, Thurlow: A composer in the smaller forms whose work is based almost entirely upon Indian material, best known by the enormously popular *By the Waters of Minnetonka*, recorded many times. On one record (Victor 21972) Lieurance accompanies Barone in a flute-piano version, and on the other side accompanies Barone playing several Indian melodies on a native flute.

MAGANINI, Quinto (Naturalized): Better known as a conductor than composer. His chamber orchestra concerts frequently include both old music and contemporary American works of uncommon interest. He might be considered for making records with his ensemble.

MANA-ZUCCA: A prolific woman composer of salon songs, many of which have been recorded, and none of which is significant.

MASON, Daniel Gregory: America's foremost musical reactionary, a voluble and bitter writer on musical subjects (*Dilemma of American Music, Tune In America!*, etc.), and a professorial aridly Brahmsian composer. No recordings, but as Mason is quite

a power in conservative musical circles, some private or society recordings (but not by the N. M. Q. R.) are not unlikely.

McKINLEY, Carl Organist and composer in conservative idiom, best known by his *Masquerade* for orchestra. No recordings; none likely.

McPHEE, Colin (Naturalized): A former Canadian associated with the younger modernists, influenced by the contemporary British school of composition. No recordings, but some are not unlikely from the N. M. Q. R.

MOORE, Douglas: A lively and characteristically American talent, especially gifted in writing incidental music. His *Pageant of P. T. Barnum* is a rollicking bit of pure Americana and should by all means be recorded. Moore is likely to figure more importantly: he has the spirit and may acquire a profounder substance. There are no recordings as yet.

MOROSS, Jerome: Usually considered an *enfant terrible* of the younger young radicals, Moross strikes me as one of the most promising talents of American music. His music so far is thoroughly rody, noisy, vulgar, and—what so little American music is—genuinely exciting. It may have all kinds of faults, but it is thoroughly alive and thoroughly native. No other composer has so thoroughly assimilated the spirit as well as the tricks of jazz in his works, or been so little restricted by the formalizations of jazz. Such of his works as I have heard (the ballet for orchestra, the *Everlasting Blues*, the settings of ballads like *Cocaine Lil*, bits of a projected opera, *Frankie and Johnny*, and an overture for a burlesque theatre) are those of a new, lively, and extremely fresh (both senses of the word) voice. We are sure to hear much more of Moross in the near future, and recordings will probably appear before long from the N. M. Q. R. or some similar recording society.

MORRIS, Harold: One of the soundest composers among the now middle-aged modernists. He was trained entirely in this country, and while he has written comparatively little, his works reveal genuine power. No recordings; none very likely at present.

ORSTEIN, Leo (Naturalized): The first American ultra-modernist, Ornstein was setting our musical world by the ears around war times. In recent years his diabolical gusto seems to have burned itself out, and he is apparently settling into the groove of a concert pianist. The sensationalism of his most characteristic compositions undoubtedly still makes it hard to evaluate their significance. But one work, at the very least, is important: the piano concerto, originally a sonata for two pianos. It should be recorded but the chances are small.

PISTON, Walter: A sound composer of the now middle-aged conservatively modern group. He does not write a great deal, but what he does has some solidity and vitality,

qualities that are likely to be developed further. No recordings; none likely unless by the N. M. Q. R. or some other society.

PORTER, Cole: One of the most sophisticated and ingenious popular song writers. *What is This Thing Called Love*, *Night and Day*, and other less popular airs have an elegance and charm far above the better Tin Pan Alley creations. Whiteman records a so-called symphonic arrangements of *Night and Day* together with a medley of other Porter numbers on Victor 36098, but this disc is less attractive than some of the records of individual songs, particularly those made in England.

PORTER, Quincy: A Guggenheim musical fellow, now teaching at Vassar, and composer of considerable chamber and orchestral music. His best known work is an Ukrainian suite for orchestra. No recordings; none likely.

REISER, Alois (Naturalized): A Czechoslovakian, once a pupil of Dvorak, whose *From Mount Rainier*, *Gobi* prelude, etc., are occasionally programmed by American orchestras. No recordings; none likely.

RIEGGER, Wallingford: One of the most important figures in the Cowell group, writing music often in quite atonal idiom, but based on a sound training in the older classic forms and idioms. No recordings as yet, but the N. M. Q. R. plans to do a Trio of his for harp, flute, and 'cello, played by Salzedo, Barrère, and Britt, sometime this year. His *American Polonaise—Triple Jazz* might be a good choice for recording, and also the frequently played *Study in Sonority* for ten violins, or multiples of ten.

ROGERS, Bernard: A winner of the Pulitzer Prize and a Guggenheim Fellowship, associated with the Hanson-Rochester school where his works have most frequently been played. His best known work is probably the *Rising of Lazarus*, a canata. No recordings; none likely unless by a Rochester recording society.

RUDHYAR, Dane (Naturalized): A French-American super-Scriabin, with the Russian's aspirations toward the creation of music for mystic rituals. There is a good study of Rudhyar's music in Rosenfeld's *Hour with American Music*. No recordings; none very likely.

RUGGLES, Carl: Another mystic, but a saltier, far more American type, unmistakably stemming from New England. Ruggles has not written a great deal, but his work, despite its quite radical idioms, has made considerable impact and has been frequently performed by the more progressive orchestras and ensembles. Recorded examples would be very welcome, and luckily the N. M. Q. R. promises to include his Sextet, "*Angels*," played by a flute ensemble directed by Barrère in its 1934 output. Ruggle's other best known compositions are *Men and Mountains*, *The Sun Treader*, and *Portals*.

SAAR, Louis Victor (Naturalized): One of the older and more conservative, if not professorial, naturalized talents. No recordings; none likely.

SALZEDO, Carlos (Naturalized): An ardent player, teacher, and propagandist of the harp. His compositions are less interesting musically than as expositions of modern harp technique, but Salzedo is an enthusiastic and valuable force in the performance of modern native works. No recordings, but a few smaller works would be valuable as examples of contemporary writing for his instrument. Salzedo will participate in several of the N. M. Q. Recordings.

SAMINSKY, Lazare (Naturalized): A powerful and prolific composer, writing in conservatively modern idiom, often employing Jewish and Russian material. Also a lecturer and writer on music (his *Music of Our Day* is published by Thomas Y. Crowell). For some reason most of Saminsky's music that I have heard has left me quite cold, but he unquestionably is one of the most important men among the older musical immigrants. No recordings; none very likely unless the League of Composers issues some society recordings.

SANDERS, Robert L.: A former fellow at the American Academy in Rome, writing church music mostly. One of his *Barn Dances* for orchestra was recently performed in New York and might make a good release in the Victor Educational series. No recordings as yet.

SCHELLING, Ernest H.: The well-known pianist and conductor has lately confined most of his attention to his children's concerts, but his somewhat facile works are still frequently played. Best known is the *Victory Ball*, recorded by Mengelberg and the N. Y. Philharmonic on Victor 1127/8—one of the first electrical recordings. He was also represented on discs by a rather colorless *Nocturne à raguze*, recorded by Paderewski on Victor 6700, now withdrawn. Schelling's own compositions are cosmopolitan rather than native in character, but he has done good service for American music by programming a number of native works in his concerts.

SESSIONS, Roger: Sessions has written little, but both music and the man are highly significant in the American musical scene. He is associated with Aaron Copland in the Copland-Sessions concerts and his most important compositions are the incidental music for *The Black Maskers* and a symphony. Sessions is obviously strongly under the influence of Stravinski, but his music reveals a strong personality, and the first movement of the symphony in particular could have been written only by an American. There are no Sessions recordings yet, but they are sure to come along before long, probably by one of the recording societies, although one of the major companies might well tackle the symphony.

SHEPHERD, Arthur: One of the older and more conservative group, a good solid talent, but producing nothing outstanding until the four Western pieces, *Horizons* (orchestra), which have been widely played and which would be an admirable choice for recording as they utilize cowboy and other native material, handled in racy and effective fashion. Strongly recommended to the major companies.

SHILKRET, Nathaniel: Better known as a conductor, long a musical director of the Victor Company and conductor of many programs over the air, Shilkret is represented on records as a composer only by a few minor works: *Skyward* (on the odd side of the New Years Eve in New York set—35987, now withdrawn), and several salon pieces, *Dance of the Toy Regiment* (Victor 19849), *Plantation Dance* (Victor 24093), and *Wee Bit o' Heart* (Victor 24101), etc. However Shilkret's arrangements and orchestrations have been used in many recordings, and he has conducted a considerable number of American works for the phonograph.

SKILTON, Charles Sanford: Another older man, a less significant creative talent, but important for his many years of work with native Indian material. His orchestra settings of Indian dances have been widely played and several of them have been recorded: *Cheyenne War Dance* (from the *Suite Primeval*) and *Shawnee Indian Hunting Dance*, played by the Victor Orchestra under Bourdon (Victor 22144); *Rogue River Indian Deer Dance* (*Suite Primeval*) by Bourdon and the Victor Orchestra (Victor 22174). The *Suite Primeval* was first recorded—acoustically—by Columbia, but has long since been discontinued.

SLONIMSKY, Nicolas (Naturalized): Better known as a conductor than as composer, although some of his witty, fluent, rather facile songs and piano pieces are frequently performed. Slonimsky is most important as an exponent of contemporary American and Pan-American radicals, whose works figure strongly on his concerts. A good choice for conducting some contemporary American chamber orchestral works for the phonograph.

SMITH, David Stanley: Old school, a typical professorial talent, whose works are occasionally played but have little influence or true significance. No recordings; none likely.

SOWERBY, Leo: The first American fellow in Rome, writing prolifically in very conservative modern vein. Sowerby occasionally employs American material, as in his orchestral work, *Prairie*, but despite the frequent performances of his works and the considerable esteem in which he is held by the conservatives, I find little that is truly alive and vital in his music. However, his settings of *The Irish Washerwoman* and *Money Musk* are attractive and lively bits of minor Ameri-

cana. The former is recorded by the Victor Orchestra (Victor 22131). The *Money Musk* should be done too. Recordings of Sowerby's major works are unlikely.

SPALDING, Albert: The distinguished American violinist, now losing most of his former distinction in popular broadcast programs, has occasionally composed. His *Alabama* for violin was once recorded by Zimbalist for Victor (acoustic, withdrawn).

SPELMAN, Timothy Mather: An expatriate writing, rather precious music, much of it of religious, mediaeval or mystical cast. No recordings; none likely.

SPIALIK, Hans: A noted orchestrator of Tin Pan Alley tunes and revues, and sponsor of concerts devoted to unfamiliar music. Spialik's *Tall City*, a symphonic jazz work, has lately been played and broadcast frequently and would make good material for recording by Paul Whiteman's concert orchestra or some similar band.

STEINERT, Alexander Lang: An American Academy in Rome fellow whose music—impressionistic in idiom as I remember the few examples I have heard—is occasionally played in concert. No recordings; none likely.

STILL, William Grant: Perhaps the most important of the younger Negro composers, utilizing Negro material in his works, and writing in conservatively modern idioms, not infrequently spiced with jazz. Still has written a great deal, but has yet to find himself. When and if he does he is likely to develop into an extremely significant creative voice. It is unfortunate that none of his works are recorded, as they are representative of an important trend in Afro-American music. At one time a minor (but rather interesting) work was available: Still's *Fantasy of the "St. Louis Blues,"* played by Voorhee's Orchestra (Columbia 1078-D, now withdrawn).

STOCK, Frederick (Naturalized): Another conductor-composer, who has recorded his own *Symphonic Waltz* with the Chicago Symphony (Victor 7387). The Stock work most needed on records is not one of his original compositions, but his skillful re-orchestration of Schumann's "*Rhenish*" symphony.

STOESSEL, Albert: The American conductor and choral trainer, now associated with the Juillard Institute, has done some composing. The only recording of which I know is his setting of the *Volga Boatmen's Song* played by the National High School Orchestra under Maddy (Victor 35924).

STOJOWSKI, Sigismond (Naturalized): A Naturalized Pole writing minor works in conventional European idioms. Paderewski has recorded his *Chant d'Amour*, Op. 26, No. 3 (Victor 6633), and *By the Brookside* (Victor 1426).

STRINGHAM, Edwin John: I am not familiar with any of the music of this composer, educator, and writer on music. Most of the performances of his works seem to have been in the middle or far west. No recordings; none likely.

(To be concluded)

Correspondence

The Editor does not accept responsibility for opinions expressed by correspondents. No notice will be taken of unsigned letters, but only initials or a pseudonym will be printed if the writer so requests. Contributions of general interest to our readers are welcomed. They should be brief and written on one side of the paper only. Address all letters to the CORRESPONDENCE COLUMN, The Music Lovers' Guide, 42 East 20th Street, New York City.

From a Co-Author of "Minute Sketches of the Great Composers"

EDITOR, MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE:

Will you kindly send me a copy of the January 1934 number of the MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE, for which I enclose ten cents. My copy seems to have been mislaid, and I want to keep a complete file of the magazine, which I find extremely informative and helpful. The writing and intelligent appraisal of modern American composers is a feature which appears to me extremely worth-while, inasmuch as the comment is characterized by a combination of tolerance and critical judgment on the part of the commentator.

New York City. HELEN L. KAUFMANN

Another "Living American Composer"

EDITOR, MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE:

I notice that in your "List of Living American Composers" you have omitted the name of Carl Eppert of Milwaukee, whose *Traffic* has been performed by the Chicago and Cincinnati Orchestras, and which is soon to be performed by the Philadelphia organization.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin. O. F. BROWN.

From a Michigan Hospital

EDITOR, MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE:

Enclosed you will find \$1.00 in money order which I understand is the subscription price of your MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE. If possible I would like to begin with the September issue, the beginning of Vol. 2. And I would like to know if you have Vol. 1 (1932-33) still available. If you have, I should be glad to send for it.

A friend of mine had a number (August '33) which he happened to see in our library—the only number they had. I am very much for it. And you have a great little Paper,—just what I have been looking for

and really need. I am pleausurably insane about good records but can't spend as much as I would like to on records, and in this way your paper will be a great help to me, I believe.

I have a copy of *The Musical Record*, but your publication is, as far as I can see, just as good if not superior to it and costs much less.

C. H. PETERSON.

Battle Creek, Michigan.

* * *

"Speaking of Jazz . . ."

(Applause and Cat-Calls for Mr. Hadley's Interpretation)

EDITOR, MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE:

When I glance through the "hot jazz" reviews in your lively little magazine, or see—as in the last issue—a whole article devoted to a negro jazz band leader, I feel that even the MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE is poisoned with the jazz insanity that seems to have corrupted to many contemporary musicians and writers on music. And when I read that you planned to publish a series of articles, "From Symphony to Jazz," (Save the mark.) my heart sank still further. But James Hadley's article, "Speaking of Jazz . . ." restored my faith in musical humanity. Mr. Hadley, whose musical training and tastes are obviously soundly grounded in the truly great schools of music, gives jazz its full credit for its qualities of humor and color, but he firmly and incontrovertably puts it in its place, as the "dead cat" of music. I'd like to frame his lines about Gershwin's supremely vulgar *American in Paris*: ". . . its attraction resides in qualities almost exclusively external, for there is nothing novel, moving or dignified about this unlovely wart on the face of music. The present-day jazz is not music or real melody; it is merely rhythm and accent, degraded and debased from its original sources among the ancient Tahitian and Abyssinian tribal dances."

Thank you, Mr. Hadley! Now let Mr. Gershwin and his followers go back to the appropriately named Tin Pan Alley where they belong, and keep their noisome musical obscenities to the dance halls and cabarets where it belongs, the exclusive entertainment of the incorrigibly moronic and vulgar.

Boston, Massachusetts.

S. E. B.

* * *

EDITOR, MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE:

The articles by James Hadley have long seemed to me to be among the most priceless contributions to musical literature, but when he abandoned his beloved ballet composers to discuss jazz (or more accurately the jazz of George Gershwin) it was almost too good to be true. I expect to hear of Mr. Gershwin's suicide any day now; no one could live under the withering condemnation of Mr. Hadley's invectives. The "dead cat" of music is not only trampled on, it is flayed in the bargain. Tin Pan Alley and the writers of what they thought to be "symphonic jazz," but which we now learn is "no sich animal," might just as well close up shop.

Their fake is at last exposed, and while the exploding of the scandal may bring Parisian rioting in the streets around Times Square, the cause of Beauty and True Art will prevail. A critical giant killer has slain the Big Bad Wolf of music.

New York City.

G. R.

* * *

EDITOR, MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE:

Just where does James Hadley find basis for his repeated statement that Gershwin used "I'll build a stairway to Paradise." It's the first I've heard of it. He may be right, but his complete lack of appreciation of Gershwin's music, and jazz in general, makes me strongly inclined to take this statement with as much salt as I do his others.

Stamford, Conn.

H. C.

* * *

EDITOR, MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE:

I am surprised to find in the same issue that also contains a sympathetic study of one of the outstanding practitioners of jazz—Duke Ellington—an article that betrays so fundamental a misconception and misunderstanding of jazz as that by Mr. James Hadley. Of all the attacks on jazz I have ever read, I have never come across one so short-sighted as this. Mr. Hadley makes his first mistake by complacently assuming that "the most important figure in the world of jazz is George Gershwin," and proceeds to demolish Gershwin's larger works with back-handed praise or out and out condemnation. But why assume that the world of jazz revolves around one man? Gershwin is an important jazz figure, of course, but one steadily waning in importance. In the field of true jazz he is not to be compared with the leaders of the Negro schools: Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Benny Carter, Fletcher Henderson, etc., or the great school of white hot jazz that was formerly led by Red Nichols, Frankie Trumbauer, Joe Venuti, etc. And in the field of symphonic jazz Gershwin's experiments have been surpassed by the works of Copland, Constant Lambert, Jerome Moross, and several others.

It is easy for those who know nothing whatever about jazz and who are unwilling or incapable of learning anything about it to pen a diatribe such as Mr. Hadley's. But it is utterly meaningless. The trained musicians and alive music critics of today have a different story to tell, and they have found much in jazz to admire and to learn from. No one denies that jazz has many weaknesses, but it has something else besides: a rude vitality and power that have added a new note to music, and indeed it already has had an appreciable influence in determining the course and idioms of modern composition.

The music that Mr. Hadley truly admires, that of Saint-Saëns and Massenet and Debussy and Chabrier, has long since faded out of the picture of musical progress; it has a little antique charm, but no genuine sig-

nificance to the contemporary musical mind. Mr. Hadley is still dwelling far back in the nineteenth century, and if jazz is for him only a "dead cat," then all contemporary music, and modern life itself, must be for him a totally closed book.

Allenton, Penna.

"TWENTY-FIVE"

* * *

A Little Debate Over "Die Winterreise"

EDITOR, MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE:

According to one of your staff critics, writing in the February issue of the *Winterreise* recording, "These songs stem unmistakably from the early nineteenth century, products of the nostalgia and despair of an adolescent mind. Before his death Schubert gave a few brilliant signs of attaining maturity, but his death denied their fulfillment." The nostalgia and despair are the poet's, Mueller. Schubert's mind was a mirror in which was reflected in music the moods and meanings of the poems he set. He was not critical of the poems and set many unworthy of music, with the result that a large number of his songs are unworthy of him. But his musical mind was not adolescent. It was fully matured at 18. Witness *Gretchen am Spinnrade*, *Der Erlkönig* and many other great songs of his youth. From this very cycle "*Die Winterreise*" a number of songs show anything but an adolescent mind and a lack of maturity. Witness *Die Wetterfahne*, *Der Lindenbaum*, *Rückblick*, *Frühlingstram*, *Die Post*, *Die Krähe*, *Letzte Hoffnung*, *Der Wegweiser*, *Mut*, and *Der Leiermann*.

Mr. Hüsch is far from being an ideal singer of these songs. He is good but plodding. When compared to Bispham, Gerhardt, Tauber, Van Rooy, Schlusnus, Rehkemper, and Scheidl he is obviously third rate. He is not "unquestionably one of the foremost male *Lieder* singers of our generation" as your reviewer states. He has a good sense of rhythm and exceptionally clear diction, but, to judge from these records, he is lacking in imagination and therefore in color, flexibility, and in plasticity of phrasing. He has done a good workmanlike job, but it is nothing to call forth such compliments as your reviewer has given him. It is a pity that Schlusnus or Tauber was not engaged for this recording. Then there might have been a recording worth exclaiming over.

Syracuse, N. Y.

H. L. BUTLER.

REVIEWER'S NOTE: It is always a pleasure to receive sincere and intelligent criticism. Too often I fear that my reviews must have little real meat in them, when they do not stir up any debate or questioning. It is far better to be flatly contradicted—with specific reasons—than to have one's criticism complacently accepted without thought.

However, I should like to reply to Mr. Butler's vigorous attack. First, in regard to the merits of Gerard Hüsch, I may indeed have paid him somewhat excessive praise. I quite agree with Mr. Butler that he is not

one of the greatest *Lieder* singers of all time, but I still hold that he is one of the foremost male *Lieder* singers of this generation. Schlusnus at his best is better, but he is by no means as dependable a singer as Hüsch. While as for Tauber, he has already been given a chance to do at least some of the *Winterreise* songs (Columbia Masterworks set No. 90). His records were made several years ago before Tauber had gone over exclusively to musical comedies and the sound films, but even then—disregarding the inferior recording he was given—not one of his performances in my mind was comparable with those by Hüsch. Tauber has, or had at least, a greater voice, but among all the record collectors and musicians I have spoken with about his records I never found one who would agree with Mr. Butler that Tauber's Schubert was preferable to Hüsch's. That I am not alone in my praise of Hüsch's singing, and that others do not find him "lacking in imagination" can be attested by the lively enthusiasm expressed by every European review I have read of Hüsch's singing. One example must suffice: Robert Lorenz writing in the December 1933 *Gramophone* (of Hüsch's Wolf records), "I myself have rarely heard a voice with such tonal and expressive range as we hear it in *Epiphanias*, where Hüsch seems to have three voices in one at his disposal. But his attainment does not end there by any means, for in addition to an astonishing technique he satisfies me like no other singer who has a musical sense of humor, not necessarily broad, caricatured or low, but adaptable to all average purposes."

In proclaiming Schubert's maturity of mind is not Mr. Butler confusing maturity of technique (in this case of composition) with a maturity of intellect? Schubert was a natural genius, and as Mr. Butler states, his *musical mind* was fully matured at the age of eighteen. But that does not mean that the man himself was truly mature. The very fact that his taste in song texts was so uncritical is an indication of a lack of maturity. Müller was a poor poet, but the adolescent despair and nostalgia of his verses was reflected in Schubert music, not so much because Schubert consciously strove to reflect them, but because they struck a deeply sympathetic chord in Schubert's own—and again I suggest—adolescent mind. Schubert was a genius where Müller was not, so the resulting songs are indeed musical masterpieces. I would be foolish to deny their greatness, but I still believe that they are alien in spirit to us today. Beautiful music, but dated music, just as much of Beethoven's work is today beautiful but dated, quite unlike the timeless music of his last years.

Perhaps I can best illustrate the point I tried to make in my review by suggesting a comparison between Schubert and Wolf. Both were natural musical geniuses, gifted with a rare instinct for setting words to exactly appropriate music. Wolf did not

have Schubert's gift of melodic invention, and considering the age in which each composer worked, Wolf's musical technique was not a great deal more highly developed than Schubert's. Yet while the comparative beauty of the two men's best songs might be a matter for endless and fruitless debate, I believe that there can be no question regarding the maturity of intellect revealed by the two men. A song like Schubert's *Wetterfahne* (or any of the others Mr. Butler names) compared with one of Wolf's Michelangelo songs demonstrates my argument exactly. To the modern mind the Schubert work lacks living significance: its beauty is already archaic, a product of a mind rooted in nineteenth century romanticism, and a mind that never outgrew its age—which aesthetically speaking was the most highly adolescent age in music. Wolf's work, while ascribable to a later part of the nineteenth century, still has meaning and point for modern sensibilities—the product of a mind probably less musically gifted, but intellectually far profounder and broader—in short, far more mature.

* * *

The Missing Coachman's Song

EDITOR, MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE:

I am wondering if you or any of your readers could help me out. "Waltz Time," a motion picture based on J. Strauss' *Der Fledermaus*, has in it a melody sung by the coachman, the name and recording of which I would like to learn. I don't think it is from the operetta, although it sounds like Strauss to me. I have gone through the Polydor abridged version of the operetta, but find no trace of said "Coachman's Song," which, as I recollect, started "Come out, Vienna." Nor is there any place in the libretto for a coachman, or his song.

Incidentally, the movie is the gayest and heartiest I have seen in many a day. I find my collection of 400 to 500 records sadly lacking in happy, spirited Viennese melodies and I am setting out to repair the condition.

THOMAS F. SLATTERY, JR.

Philadelphia, Penna.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Can some reader of the MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE supply the desired information?

* * *

Trade Announcements and Price Changes

Effective February 15, 1934, the RCA Victor Company, Inc., announced increased prices on imported Gramophone (H. M. V.) records issued by its affiliated companies in Europe.

Ten-inch plum label records ("B," "K," "AE," "EG," etc., series), which were \$1.25 each, will now cost \$1.35 each.

Twelve-inch plum label records ("C," "L," "S," "EH," "AF," etc., series), which were \$1.75 each, will now cost \$1.90 each.

Ten-inch red label records ("DA," "E," "P," "AV," etc., series), which were \$1.50 each, will now cost \$1.85 each.

Twelve-inch red or black label records ("DB," "W," "D," "EJ," etc., series), which were \$2.00 each, will now cost \$2.50 each.

This price increase is of course due to the depreciation of the American dollar against foreign currencies, with a consequent greatly increased cost in importing European records.

* * *

Other price increases which have been in effect for some time, but which have not been formerly announced in these pages are: the increase in price of imported Polydor records (the ten-inch records, formerly \$1.25 each, are now \$1.50 each; and the twelve-inch records, formerly \$1.50 each, are now \$2.00 each), and the increase in the domestic Columbia foreign twelve-inch "X" and "F" series (formerly \$1.00 each, now \$1.25 each).

The Bluebird series put out by the RCA Victor Company, Inc., formerly sold at 25c per ten-inch record, but, effective February 18th, will sell for 35c each, or three for \$1.00. The Okeh series put out by the Columbia Phonograph Company, Inc., which used to sell for 75c per ten-inch record, but which has been inactive for several years, with only a few numbers obtainable, is now restored to the active list, at a new price of 35c per ten-inch record, or three for \$1.00. The Okeh catalogue is of particular interest to collectors of hot jazz, hill billy, and blues records, and contains among other noteworthy items all the early Louis Armstrong records.

* * *

From the Columbia Phonograph Company also comes an announcement that it has received so many requests for record catalogues of the European Columbia and affiliated companies (Odeon, Parlophone, Homocord, etc.), that it has become impracticable to continue to supply these catalogues free of charge. Effective at once, therefore, such general record catalogues will be supplied at 15c each, and monthly supplemental lists—when available—will be supplied free of charge upon request.

The Columbia Company wishes to emphasize the fact that it is in no sense attempting to profit from the wishes of its patrons for information as to European issues. The move is found after long experience to be economically unavoidable, and in some instances the charge of 15c per general record catalogue does not even cover the original cost to Columbia for obtaining these catalogues. Requests and remittances for catalogues should be addressed to the Columbia Phonograph Company, Inc., Attention Mr. George C. Jell, Manager of the Masterworks Division, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

The RCA Victor Company, while charging 15c for its domestic general record catalogue, and 25c for its Educational Catalogue, has

not yet announced any charges for catalogues of its European affiliations (H. M. V. companies). Requests for such catalogues may be addressed as before to the RCA Victor Company, Inc., Attention Mr. E. C. Forman, Dealer Service, Camden, New Jersey.

* * *

An announcement of particular interest to owners of instruments using long-playing Victor records in "automatic" arrangements, comes from the RCA Victor Company to the effect that it will now supply all long-playing sets that occupy three or more sides in *shellac* pressings for use on automatic machines. The present ordinary type of long-playing records (non-automatic) will still be pressed on Vitrolac material, but inasmuch as the Vitrolac records proved to be too thin to be caught and transferred properly by automatic record-changing devices, automatic long-playing sets will now be pressed on ordinary shellac material, and these thicker records will be handled properly by the record-changing mechanism.

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VICTOR HERBERT, 1859-1924

BY NATHANIEL SHILKRET

(Continued from page 194)

Another side of Victor Herbert's, which brings out his generous character, is the chances he took fostering young talent. Many stars of light opera today owe their start to him. His quick and sensitive ear needed very little time to know the genuine voice or player from the mediocre. Many conductors started their career after Herbert had wisely picked them for his new productions.

He was an idealist and hoped for a place to write where surroundings would be ideal. He purchased a place at Lake Placid and called it Camp Joyland—a fitting name for Herbert's abode, he who gave America more joy than any other composer. His favorite room was his own, with its splendid expressions from many prominent people—souvenirs, loving cups, rare letters. Later on, neighbors began amusing themselves by playing ukuleles, violins, and other instruments, and it took lots of persuasion to stop them. Always kind and considerate, he generally offered to buy their instruments so that he could work without being disturbed.

Herbert was fond of story telling, and always had plenty on hand. During rehearsals he was ready to poke fun at any unfortunate player or singer. I was fortunate enough to play under his baton. He was a great leader of men, and had the knack of saying almost anything he wanted to his orchestra men without offending them. This was because he loved them and they all knew it. He made friends without trying, and no wonder. His heart and his purse were always open to friends. Musicians admire a genius, and they knew that Herbert was one.

As I mentioned before, I will take some later time to write about his longer works. Let me briefly tell of his wonderful gems—compositions that have no equal in their style. They are generally masterpieces of light orchestral works. Take *Badinage*. Why do conductors love to perform it? Why do musicians play it with as much fervor now as they did ten or twenty years ago? What is the answer? Herbert put his heart and soul into it as he did in everything else. I can mention without reference the light and captivating *Air de Ballet*, the robust *Pan-Americana*, the sparkling *Al Fresco*.

During my many years of conducting, I cannot remember playing one of Victor Herbert's works without the orchestra men or myself being thrilled with playing it. It is this remarkable quality in the music that makes it distinctive and marks it as the work of a genius, who wrote as he lived and felt.

Sincerity is the most important thing after talent. Herbert had an abundance of both. Listen to his impetuous rhythms and his phrases of passion—he was always the hero in his musical themes, always alive and interesting, but seldom the same man. Never dull! Yes, we all recognize Herbert when played, but the contents when examined carefully show the same warmth, genuine musicianship, great love, in various moods and in different patterns. Victor Herbert, the world's greatest melody writer, loved all mankind.

* * *

"DER ROSENKAVALIER"

BY DR. J. E. S. VOJAN

(Continued from page 197)

Side 14. Page 216-223 (Nos. 107-123), a cut, page 226 (Nos. 127-128). Nos. 123-127 are in the Odeon record AA-79073, sung by première singers, Mmes. Osten-Plaschke and Nast.

Side 15. Page 282-288 (Nos. 233-246). Page 276 and 277 are in the British Columbia record L-2340 (Mayr and Andrassy in the same finale).

Side 16. Page 289-293 (Nos. 247 to the end of Act II).

ACT III. Side 17. Page 294-304 (Nos. 1-39).

Side 18. Page 308-321 (Nos. 50-73).

Side 19. Page 321-329 (Nos. 74-93). Here is the biggest cut.

Side 20. Page 385-396 (Nos. 207-229).

Side 21. Page 399-405 (Nos. 235-246).

Side 22. Page 405-418 (Nos. 246-266).

Side 23. Page 418-427 (Nos. 267-284).

Side 24. Page 427-434 (Nos. 284-295). Here is the famous trio, the most stupendous structure since the *Melstersinger* Quintet excellently recorded.

Side 25. Page 435-438 (Nos. 295-300).

Side 26. Page 438-442 (Nos. 301 to the end of the opera).

Analytical Notes and Reviews

BY OUR STAFF CRITICS

ORCHESTRAL

BALAKIREW: *Symphonic Poem, "Russia,"* played by the LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA conducted by HAMILTON HARTY. COLUMBIA 2 ten-inch records (17031-D and 17032-D). List price \$2.00.

Columbia's splendid March list of releases is headed by this set, one of the most anticipated and discussed recordings of the year. The work is supposed to have been recorded by a new "secret" "history-making", etc., process, which probably means that the British Columbia studios have installed some new, and undoubtedly superior equipment, and have hit upon an unusually happy choice and placement of microphones. While there is nothing literally revolutionary here, the quality of the recording is so admirable that the discs were issued as a special release in England last November (in advance of their scheduled release as a part of Volume 4 of the Columbia History of Music, January 1934). They were restricted from export to this country, so American record collectors' tongues have been hanging out as they waited for the work to appear under the domestic Columbia labels, which it now does with commendable promptness.

Mily Alexeivitch Balakirew (1837-1910), founder and leading spirit of the "Five" and one of the most important contributors to the whole Russian national musical school, is unaccountably neglected today. Previous to the release of *Russia* his only recorded works were *Islamey* (in the original piano version, and Caella's orchestration), and the symphonic poem *Thamar*. His works are seldom played in concert (I had never heard *Russia* before these records arrived). His symphonies are known only to a few. (Balakirew's music is discussed in Bernard Herrmann's "Recorded and Neglected Russian Music," Dec. '32 MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE.

Russia is a brief and simply constructed symphonic poem written to celebrate the one thousandth anniversary of Russia's individuality as a nation, founded by Rurik and his followers from Kiev and Novgorod. The piece might be called a poem of Russia's "Century of Progress"; musical depictions of historical events and the stirrings of national spirit. Several folk themes or original themes of folk cast (some of Oriental coloring) are used, and the work ends up with a "prayer for the future welfare of the country." I draw from W. R. Anderson's notes in the November 1933 *Gramophone*, which express a wonder how that prayer has been answered. If—from a musical point of view only—Szostakowicz is the answer, I doubt that Balakirew would be completely satisfied, although I am quite sure he would be intensely interested.

Sir Hamilton Harty directs a splendid performance of this little work, catching all its honest and cheerful coloring, its rude sweep and pioneering vitality. Simply constructed as is, the work carries one along and lifts one up. The scoring is that of one of the earliest masters of the art of orchestration, and every effect comes off perfectly. One does not realize how skillfully it is done, until one remembers how many of these effects, now stock in trade of every orchestrator, were originated by Balakirew.

Now for the much discussed "new process" recording . . . (and it must be remembered that I write as an engineering layman, subject to correction by technologists). The strongest impression of the recording here is that of what I might call a *healthy naturalism*. There is not the projection of tone one gets in the latest Stokowski recordings, and there is not all the bright brilliance one gets in the best H. M. V. recordings. But there is a fullness of sonority, a breadth, and robustness that has not been attained before. There is considerable, but not excessive reverberation (or room noise)—much more of course than the Stokowski recordings, but less than some of the H. M. V. recordings. In the Stokowski *Götterdämmerung* and Szostakowicz sets one hears the orchestra as it sounds to a conductor with every solo part coming up almost directly in front of one. Here, in the *Russia* discs, one hears the orchestra from back in a moderately sized hall, with the solo parts coming from one side or the other of the stage, but always part of the general ensemble, and blending with it, rather than projecting in front of it. Let me put the differences between these two types of recordings in a different way: the Victor type reproduces an orchestral work the way in which a composer would like best to have it, with every detail brought out in sharp focus, with the hearers' attention drawn surely to each significant part or parts. The Columbia type reproduces an orchestral work more as that part of the audience in the best seats in a concert hall hear it, as a blend of tone in which certain parts are more important than others, but in which no one part stands out in "stereoscopic" relief above the others. In the former one hears the music with a sort of aural operaglass; in the latter with the naked ear.

It is idle to speculate which system is better. To my mind that of Stokowski, while obviously more artificial and mechanical, is the more interesting. But the average concert goer will probably find the Columbia system much more like what he has been accustomed to. Another factor to be considered is that the Victor system goes much higher in the frequency range, while the Columbia's seemingly goes only moderately high and

stresses the bass considerably. My own conclusion is that the former is the farthest advance yet made in recording technique (for needle-cut discs), but unless it is reproduced through exceptional good amplifying installations it will not sound at its best, or even noticeably revolutionary. On the other hand the *Russia* recording seems to me to be the best compromise in recording technique to give the maximum of naturalness and brilliance on the average reproducing instrument. "You pays your money and you takes your choice. . . ."

* * *

SZOSTAKOWICZ: *Symphony No. 1 (F major)*, Op. 10, played by the PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA conducted by LEOPOLD STOKOWSKI. VICTOR Masterpiece album set M-192 (4 double-sided twelve-inch records, and 1 single-sided twelve-inch record). List price, complete with album, \$9.00. Also available in a long-playing version.

The failure of this set to arrive in time for review in the February issue entails its being reviewed simultaneously with Columbia's *Russia* records: a singular coincidence. Each set represents the farthest advance yet made in two quite different types of recording technique. One was written by the first musical spokesman of Old Russia: the other by the first musical spokesman of the New Russia. Dmitri Szostakowicz was born in Leningrad in 1906. I have heard that his first symphony was written when he was but 16 years old; at all events it was published in 1927 when he was only 22. The following year it was performed in this country by Stokowski and others. This symphony was written before Szostakowicz's music began to be consciously based on Marxian ideology. His later works (the *May Day* symphony, the *Bolt* and *Golden Age* ballets, the opera *The Nose*, music for the theatre and the movies, etc.) have strong propagandist qualities, but most critics outside Russia have been disposed to find them better propaganda than music. However that does not concern us here except as a side-light on the development of this exceedingly promising youngster, whose promise in this first symphony does not seem to be fulfilled in his later works.

Szostakowicz was a pupil of Glazounow, and in the present symphony his writing is quite conservative in idiom, although the buoyancy of his spirits and his impetuous vehemence give the work a more radical flavor than musically it actually possesses. But it will not shock conservative ears; indeed at moments it sounds positively Tchaikowskian. The composer is supposed to hold the theory that thematic re-statement and development are to be avoided, that new—although of course reasonably related—material is to be constantly introduced. That theory is only partly adhered to in the symphony. To be sure there is little real thematic development, but when he gets hold of a good tune like the march theme of the first movement or the exuberant theme of the

Scherzo, he doesn't let go of it until he has put it across in a sufficient variety of treatments. The work's best qualities are its clarity and directness. Szostakowicz has a fertile flow of musical ideas—some very good, some commonplace—and he makes no attempt to curb that flow, but he does endeavor, and very successfully, to keep the flow clean and swift. The first movement is a bit choppy and the least effective of the four. But the Scherzo is a capital bit of high spirits and scintillant orchestration; the slow movement is an eloquent if plaintive Lento, much less monotonous than the livelier first; and the Finale is exceedingly vigorous and effective, less original perhaps than the others, but constructed with admirable dramatic power. Unfortunately my review copies of the records omit by error the true part 8 (rehearsal No. 14 on page 70 of the Universal score, to No. 30 on page 82), substituting therefor the true part 9 (No. 30, page 82, to the end), which is thus heard twice, once incorrectly as part 8 and once correctly as part 9. This pressing error, which apparently occurred in all the early editions of the records (although I have not seen it mentioned in any reviews of the set so far) will undoubtedly have been corrected by the time this review is published. The faulty sets not only omit a large section of the last movement, but they give a false impression of Szostakowicz's intention in regard to repetition of thematic material.*

* * *

This set, which was appropriately recorded on the day that Soviet Russia was at last officially "recognized" by the United States government, is easily one of Stokowski's best performances on discs, and one of the finest pieces of recording ever made—similar in type to the recording technique in the

* NOTE: The error referred to has already been discovered and corrected as attested by the following letter sent to all RCA Victor Record Dealers:

"Through an unfortunate error in pressings, the records you now have of M-192, Symphony No. 1 of Szostakowicz, embody a duplication of one side and an omission of another. If you have purchased this recording, or if you have sold it to any customers, will you kindly return to us, through your wholesaler, Record No. 7887, which is the fourth record in the set? We will see that you are supplied with the correct pressing of this record. We regret that this error has occurred, and it is such a rare one that we feel we can assure you it will not occur again."

Mr. Charles O'Connell, of the RCA Victor Company, writes us further: "You may also be interested in knowing how this error came about. As you know, when we recorded this symphony, we did not take it in sections, as is usually the case, but had the Orchestra play it straight through, without pause. Unfortunately, it came out on ten record sides, with the tenth side containing but a minute or less of music. Naturally, we could not ask our patrons to buy a twelve-inch record with less than one minute of music on it. Consequently, the last two record sides were remade into one, reducing the set to nine sides. Through some error, the Pressing Plant omitted the actual side No. 8, substituted for it the original side No. 9, and added on the proper side No. 9, which, of course, made both an omission and a repetition."

recent *Götterdämmerung* set. The recording is discussed at greater length in the review of Balakirew's *Russia* elsewhere in this issue, but it should be repeated that here is probably the high mark yet achieved in studio-type recording. A new feature in major-work recording is introduced here (the idea I believe of the alert and skillful Mr. Charles O'Connell of the Victor's recording and repertory department). At the end of each record side (unless it should also be the end of a movement) the music is "faded" off a few bars before the end, while the recording of the next side has already begun, fading into the same measures. Thus one is spared the rude shock of an abrupt break—so prominent in the Sibelius Seventh recording—while at the same time—through a repetition of a few measures—all the music is preserved intact and at normal volume. On first acquaintance the scheme seems to be as effective as it is ingenious.

* * *

FREDERICK THE GREAT: *Der Schaferspiel*—Overture ("Il re pastore"), and Adagio from a Flute Concerto, played by a CHAMBER ORCHESTRA (flutist, PAUL LUTTER) conducted by HANS VON BENDA. IMPORTED H. M. V. ten-inch record (B-2868). List price \$1.35.

There are those who sniff at the great Teutonic statesman's musical powers and suspect most of his compositions to have been considerably revised and edited, if not actually written, by Quantz and other professional musicians attached to the monarch's court. But except on the basis of stronger facts than are available, one cannot very well agree with them. Frederick was an accomplished flutist, a patron of excellent taste, and with such a man there is nothing inconceivable about his writing the music played here. Possibly someone else assisted in the scoring, but the music undeniably reveals a genuine and individual personality even through the conventional idioms of the time. The slow movement from an unidentified flute concerto is gracious, courtly, rather colorless music, but the overture on the other side of the disc is a first rate little work, full of high spirits, deftly turned and brilliantly played by a small but competent chamber orchestra.

* * *

WAGNER: *Tannhäuser*—Overture and *Venusberg Music* (Paris Version), played by the PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA conducted by LEOPOLD STOKOWSKI. VICTOR 1 double-sided and 1 single-sided twelve-inch long-playing records (L-11747 and L-11748-D). List price \$4.50.

A long playing dubbing of Stokowski's celebrated recording of the *Tannhäuser* Overture and *Bacchanale*, issued in 1930 as Victor set M-78. Despite the fact that the recording was made nearly four years ago, this performance remains the most flamboyant and sensuous ever done for the phonograph. Neither Wagner nor Stokowski ever produced purpler music. A rich tonal feast that is likely to cloy on one if partaken of too freely.

MOSZKOWSKI: *Spanish Dances Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 5*, played by the VIENNA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA conducted by PAUL KERBY. COLUMBIA ten-inch record (2106-M). List price 75c.

Another Kerby disc following hard on the heels of his first American re-pressing (the *Lohengrin* and *Tannhäuser* choruses reviewed last month). Here he leads the Vienna Symphony in unpretentious but high-stepping performances of four of the familiar but still vivaciously toe-tickling Moszkowski Spanish Dances. I think that at least one of them has not been recorded before. The recording, while not exceptional, is amply vigorous, and the disc should find a good market, particularly among dancers.

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TCHAIKOWSKY: *Capriccio Italien*—Excerpts, Op. 45, played by the BERLIN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA conducted by ERICH KLEIBER. IMPORTED TELEFUNKEN twelve-inch record (E-1406). List price \$1.50.

There are other excellent versions of this orchestral *jeu d'esprit* by Blech and Stokowski (the latter on four record sides). But abbreviation is no serious fault here; a little of this scintillant "pops" music goes a long way. Kleiber gallops through it with tremendous verve, and the powerful Telefunken recording is exceedingly impressive.

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KARL P. E. BACH: *Presto* from a *Symphony in D major*, and BENDA: *Presto* from a *Violin Concerto in A major*, played by a CHAMBER ORCHESTRA (MAX STRUB, violinist) conducted by HANS VON BENDA. IMPORTED H. M. V. ten-inch record (EG-2869). List price \$1.35.

The K. P. E. Bach presto is immensely invigorating, a grand piece of solid and sinewy writing, played here with the proper exuberance and zest. The presto from a Benda violin concerto also overflows with high spirits, but it is much less individual. I doubt whether it is written by Hans von Benda, the conductor here (unless he has an uncommon ability to imitate the old styles—and particularly that of Handel's *Messiah*). The composer is probably a member of the famous German musical family, possibly Friedrich Ludwig Benda (1746-1703) who was a noted violinist and composer of violin music.

* * *

DEBUSSY: *La Mer*—*Trois esquisses symphoniques*, played by the PARIS CONSERVATORY ORCHESTRA conducted by PIERO COPPOLA. VICTOR Masterpiece Set M-89 (3 twelve-inch records, 11649 to 11651 inclusive). List price, including album, \$5.00.

Like the Lalo *Symphonie Espagnole* set played by Menuhin, this new version of *La Mer* supplants an older version under the same set number in the Victor catalogue. The individual records of the new set are given new numbers however so that one can easily determine whether he is getting the new or the older recording—which was also conducted by Coppola, but of course was considerably inferior technically. The new per-

formance was reviewed from the imported pressings in the August 1933 *MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE*. Coppola's reading is not markedly changed, but the recording, being four years newer, is naturally much improved. Yet I hardly feel that there is enough improvement. Coppola's performance is well planned and carefully executed, and the recording is effective, but neither is the best I have heard. While I am not a great admirer of *La Mer* I had looked forward to a new recording made in the British or American studios, and a performance by Toscanini or Koussevitzky—the supreme interpreters of the work.

La Mer is justly considered Debussy's finest work for orchestra, a sensitive and kaleidoscopic bit of musical impressionism, much closer knit and more richly and robustly scored than most of his works. The many who admire the music will find much to please them in this set, but the definitive phonographic version is still to appear.

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CONCERTOS

MENDELSSOHN: *Concerto in E minor* (violin and orchestra), Op. 64 (7 sides), played by JOSEF SZIGETI with the LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA conducted by THOMAS BEECHAM; and CHABRIER (arr. LOEFFLER): *Scherzo-Waltz*, played by JOSEF SZIGETI with piano accompaniment by MIKITA DE MAQALOFF (1 side). COLUMBIA Masterworks Set 190 (4 twelve-inch records). List price, including album, \$6.00.

The Mendelssohn violin concerto dates (and emphatically so) from 1844. Long a standard concert war-horse, in recent years it has been programmed somewhat less disconcerting regularity. It remains a staunch favorite of fiddlers however and it is surprising that an up-to-date version has not appeared earlier to replace the 1927 Kreisler set for Victor. Except to devout Kreislerians that version—the first complete electrical recording—was hardly extraordinary even in its best days, and today the recording and the thick orchestral accompaniment sound quite obsolete. While I am disappointed that one of Szigeti's too rare recordings had to be devoted to Mendelssohn (with the Prokofieff violin concerto that Szigeti plays so well still untouched), his performance here is surely admirable in every respect, and Beecham gets surprising rhythmical life and verve into the rather empty accompaniment. What I like best about the playing is its lack of seriousness and pretension. Soloist and orchestra dash through the work with great élan, yet the *Lied ohne Wörter* is taken with proper songfulness (and surprisingly fat solo tone). Naturally there are some bits of coarseness and an occasional slip in intonation, but the work as a whole comes off with exceptional effectiveness, and in Szigeti's deft and long-breathed phrasing even the sloppier bits of

the music come close to genuine expressiveness. The recording is not comparable to that of *Russia*, but it is clean and reasonably vigorous. Everyone who still enjoys Mendelssohn should find this set excitingly delightful. But next on Szigeti's recording program should be the Prokofieff work: to my mind the only violin concerto which fully realizes the possibilities (and limitations) of its form. It's not the greatest music ever written in this form of course, but it is the one work that is neither a virtuoso solo embellished with an orchestral accompaniment nor a symphony with violin obbligato.

On the odd side of the Mendelssohn discs Szigeti plays Löffler's transcription of Chabrier's *Scherzo-Waltz* dedicated to Ysaye and once recorded by him. This witty piece has long demanded a good electrical recording, and in Szigeti's hands it is done with all the skill and gayety one could hope for.

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BACH: *Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G major*, played by the ECOLE NORMALE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA OF PARIS (solo violin, BOUILLOL; solo flutes, CORTET and MORSEAU), conducted by ALFRED CORTOT. VICTOR 2 twelve-inch records (7915 and 7916), List price \$4.00

After remaining untouched since the ill-fated British Brunswick recording, Bach's fourth Brandenburg Concerto suddenly appears almost simultaneously in two phonographic versions. I have not yet had the opportunity of hearing the Polydor set, which takes five record sides and is played by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Melichar, but the Cortot version arrives from Victor even before the imported pressings reached us from Europe. Apparently Cortot takes rather brisker tempos than Melichar, for he gets the work on four sides, whereas Melichar runs over onto five, filling up the sixth with an Allegro movement from Reger's "Concerto in the Olden Style," Op. 123.

The fourth Brandenburg is entitled "Concerto 4 to à Violino Principale, due Flauti d'Echo, due Violini, una Viola e Violone in Ripieno, Violoncello e Continuo." The "concertino" or solo group consists of a solo violin and two flutes. Bach wrote for "echo flutes," a term of his own. Fuller-Maitland suggests that it may be justified by the manner in which the solo instruments echo the tutti passages throughout the work. When the work was played in Bach's time, "fipple" flutes were used, that is flutes with a mouth-piece on the end into which the player blew directly, as with a penny whistle. Today ordinary, or cross-flutes, are used.

Less familiar than the second and third Brandenburg Concertos, or even the fifth and sixth, the fourth little deserves its neglect. A fine sturdy work, it is not only joyous and invigorating to hear, but it is a beautiful example of Bach's skill in treating a few germinal motives in an almost infinite variety of ways. The main theme of the first

movement reappears constantly, but never palls due to the diversity of the keys employed, and the deftness and imagination with which Bach tosses it around among his instruments. The flow of unquenchable high spirits never flags for a moment. The slow movement is an Andante, built up almost entirely on echo passages between the orchestra and "concertino." The first flute, played here by Cortet, dominates throughout, its delicate embroideries of the principal motive finally resolving into a graceful solo run that ends in a Phrygian cadence, leading into the presto finale. This is a swash-buckling fugue (the subject announced by the viola) that fairly bursts with exuberance. Again a minimum of material is used with unbelievable maximum of effect. This fourth Brandenburg Concerto was re-written by Bach as a work in F for solo harpsichord, two flutes, and strings, but the transference of the violin passages to the keyboard, skillfully as Bach did it, is not too happy.

Cortot's direction of this performance is magnificent. Quite properly he uses a harpsichord (probably played by himself) for the continuo part. His soloists are excellent, and the little Ecole Normale orchestra gives them perfect support. Add vigorous, open, and brilliant recording, and one gets another Bach set that should follow that of the fifth Brandenburg concerto into every phonographic library.

* * *

LALO: *Symphonie Espagnole* (violin and orchestra), played by YEHUDI MENUHIN with the PARIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA conducted by GEORGES ENESCO. VICTOR Masterpiece Set M-136 (4 twelve-inch records, 7943 to 7946 inclusive). List price, including album, \$8.00.

Received too late for review in this issue. This Menuhin version of Lalo's sparkling *Symphonie Espagnole* replaces that by Henry Merckel in the Victor catalogue (reviewed in the September 1932 MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE). The set number (M-136) remains the same, but the individual records have been given new catalogue numbers. Menuhin's performance will be reviewed next month.

* * *

CHAUSSE: *Poème* (for violin and orchestra), played by YEHUDI MENUHIN with the PARIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA conducted by GEORGES ENESCO. VICTOR 2 twelve-inch records (7913 and 7914). List price \$4.00.

Reviewed from the imported pressings in last month's MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE, and now released with commendable alacrity by Victor. Not all collectors have shared my perhaps over-enthusiasm for this set, but I still feel that it is one of Menuhin's finest recorded performances, and a piece of music of uncommon enchantment. There are traces of lushness here of course, but little or nothing of the Wagnerian and Franckian thickness of Chausson's other works, and the sustained mood of ecstatic contemplation is to my mind very close to a Gallic equivalent of Delius. This music fits in badly with cur-

rent tonal styles, but its passion and serenity are qualities that can exist simultaneously only in great and genuine works of art, not to be measured down to the fixed scales of any single day or year. The *Poème* is impeccably played and recorded; one could not ask for a more exquisitely fitting phonographic dress.

* * *

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto No. 3 in C minor* (piano and orchestra), Op. 37, played by ARTUR SCHNABEL with the LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA conducted by MALCOLM SARGENT. VICTOR Masterpiece Set M-194 (5 twelve-inch records). List price, including album, \$10.00. (The concerto occupies 9 record sides; on the 10th SCHNABEL, solo, plays BEETHOVEN's *Rondo in C major*, Op. 51, No.1).

Reviewed from the imported pressings in the September 1933 MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE. This is the fourth of Beethoven's five piano concertos to be recorded by Schnabel and the Philharmonic. All four are now issued under the Victor labels. The one remaining work, the second concerto, has yet to be released by H. M. V. in England, but presumably it was recorded at the same time as the others and is only awaiting a convenient publication date. While the third concerto was recorded twice before, one was an acoustic version (by Murdoch for English Columbia) and the other (Hambourg for H. M. V.) was thoroughly inadequate even at the time of its issue several years ago. The work, written in 1800, was one of the composer's favorites, and he rightly considered it a decided advance on his first two essays in this form. While the third concerto does not possess the lyrical and dramatic power of the fourth (to my mind the best of the five), it is a delightful and unhackneyed work, particularly interesting for the composer's experimentation with dialogue passages between piano and orchestra, later to be used so effectively in the slow movement of the fourth concerto. Needless to say the standards of performance and recording are on the same high level as those of the other Schnabel-Beethoven releases.

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GRIG: *Concerto in A minor* (piano and orchestra), Op. 16, played by WILHELM BACHAUS with the NEW SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA conducted by JOHN BARBIROLLI. IMPORTED H. M. V. 3 twelve-inch records (DB-2074 to DB-2076). List price \$7.50.

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The Grieg piano concerto is ever with us. I see little reason for a new version unless it could be done on the same level of recording excellence as the Tchaikowsky piano concerto with Rubinstein. It is not, although the recording is unquestionably good. Bachaus' tone records not too well, and comes through here much less impressively and attractively than that of the orchestra. In other respects the set has many merits, principally the clean-cut and straightforward execution of the solo part. There are touches of pretty rank romanticism (particularly

on Barbirolli's part), but on the whole the reading manages to avoid the excessive emotionalism with which the work is usually invested. For clarity of playing and recording at least this version is far superior to any of the earlier ones.

* * *

SIBELIUS: *Romance*, Op. 78, No. 2 (violin and orchestra), and STENHAMMER: *Sentimental Romance for violin and orchestra*, played by FRANCESCO ASTI with the GÖTEBORG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA conducted by TOR MANN. IMPORTED H. M. V. twelve-inch record (C-2004). List price \$1.90.

I hasten over this disc with a single hearing. It is not pleasant to hear a giant dwarfing himself to murmur pretty nothings over a cup of tea in a salon. Sibelius here is on the same level as Stenhammer, both writing lush sentimental stuff, Stenhammer rather more skillfully. The playing is done as emotionally as the music demands, which calls for plenty of emoting, but Asti with his penetrating vibrato is amply equal to it.

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CHAMBER MUSIC

BACH (transcribed by FISCHER): *Ricercare in 6 voices on a theme by Frederick the Great* (from "*Das musikalische Opfer*") played by a CHAMBER ORCHESTRA (strings) conducted by EDWIN FISCHER. IMPORTED H. M. V. twelve-inch records (DB-4419). List price \$2.50.

A *ricercare* or *ricercata* was originally a rather free fantasy in contrapuntal style on a theme or several themes. After a fashion it was the predecessor of the fugue form, but when it was used in the eighteenth century (as here) it was usually a very elaborate and erudite fugue. Frederick the Great, a lively patron of music and no mean musician in his own right (two recordings of his compositions are reviewed elsewhere in this issue) had long wished Bach to visit him and exhibit his famed talents. In the spring of 1747 Bach finally arrived and as soon as Frederick had heard the news he interrupted his own flute concert, shouting, "*Der alte Bach ist da!*", and brought Bach—still in travelling clothes—in to try out all the new instruments in the palace, many of them the latest inventions of the day. Bach was particularly interested in the King's new Silbermann pianos and sat down to test one of them, requesting after the custom of the time a theme for improvisation. Frederick gave him the noble theme heard on the present disc, (and if it was his own invention, it testifies brilliantly to the monarch's musical genius) and requested a six-part fugue on it, which of course "old Bach" rattled off with nonchalance. (There were giants indeed in those days. . .) When Bach returned to Leipzig he prepared as a bread-and-butter letter a musical work called *Das musikalische Opfer*—probably the finest thank-you letter any host ever received. The work con-

sisted of a long series of elaborate treatments of the King's theme: a *Ricercare* in three voices, the present *Ricercare* in six voices, eight canons of various types, a "fuga canonica in epidiapente," a sonata (trio) for flute—a graceful recognition of Frederick's skill as a flutist—violin and figured bass, and a "canon perpetuus" for flute violin and figured bass. The work was headed by an ingenious acrostic inscription:

Regis Iussu Cantio Et Reliqua
Canonica Arte Resoluta

indicating that he had been given the theme by the King and had developed it elaborately.

While the six-voice *Ricercare* was probably written out in the original in compressed score, it is of course no more necessarily piano music than the various pieces in the *Kunst der Fuge*. Like them it is pure music in the truest sense of the work, intended primarily to be heard mentally. In actual performance the multiplicity of the parts and the intricacy of their weaving is much better handled by a group of instruments than on the solo keyboard. Fischer has transcribed it very simply for strings, and conducts it with that blend of directness and eloquence which characterizes his own piano performances. The recording is superbly full and clean, and the small body of strings plays with an attentive ear for tone quality as well as for clear-cut and expressive articulation of the parts.

The music itself cannot be described so easily as its factual history. To avoid hyperbole as much as possible, I can only say that it is one of the most significant instrumental pieces by Bach, both in the boldness, intelligence, and imagination with which it is constructed, and the infinite wealth and profundity of pure feeling it conveys. To me this *Ricercare* is far more moving, far more dramatic, far more searching than the organ Toccata and Fugue in D minor with all its Stokowskian orchestral sonorities. Six voices speak here, but they speak with the many-tongued utterance of the supreme musical genius this world knows, an Apocalyptic voice with the tongues of men and angels. One cannot hear this music casually; it shakes one to the depth of one's being: an imperishable monument to the audacity and breadth of the human mind.

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MOZART: *Quartet in F* (oboe and strings) (K. 370), played by LEON GOOSSENS and LÉNER, ROTH, and HARTMAN of the LÉNER STRING QUARTET. COLUMBIA 2 twelve-inch records (68157-D and 68158-D). List price \$3.00.

Reviewed from the imported pressings on page 148 of the January 1934 issue of the MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE. American Columbia is to be praised and thanked for getting out this prime Mozart set in such short order. With every hearing one's delight in these records brims over. The music is pure Mozartian gold: the happy-go-lucky and

piquant first and third movements reveal the more familiar Mozart in his most care-free moods, while the brief but poignant Andante strikes down toward the deeper vein of feeling of his greatest works. The performance is no less enchanting. I know of no other oboist who surpasses Goossens, or who even approaches his combination of consummate technique with surprisingly extended variety of tonal coloring. A somewhat brighter edge to the Léners' string tone would have been more in keeping with the sweet-bitter savor of Goossens' matchless gusto and color, but apart from that the playing of the strings is not far behind that of the oboe, and the recording is admirably clear. With the *Concertante Sinfonie* (Columbia) and the piano *Fantasia in C minor* (Kathleen Long, H. M. V.) this set is one of the outstanding Mozart recordings of the last year or two, and each of them is indispensable to every Mozartian.

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DVORAK: *Quartet in G major*, Op. 106, played by the PRAGUE STRING QUARTET (ZILKA—BERGER—CERNY—SADLO). VICTOR Masterpiece Set M-195 (4 twelve-inch records). List price, including album, \$8.00.

Reviewed from the imported pressings in the January 1934 MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE. This is one of the very best of Dvorak's chamber works, far superior to the more popular "American" quartet. It reveals the familiar

qualities of easy melodic gifts and piquant but limited rhythmic patterns, but it is much more strongly and solidly constructed than Dvorak's other works, much deeper in feeling. The Prague Quartet plays with refreshing sincerity and informality, getting a good bright tone throughout. Sometimes it is a bit shrill, a tendency not lessened by the very bright and open recording, but the reading is surely exactly the sort that Dvorak himself would have wished.

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TARTINI (arr. KREISLER): *Sonata, "The Devil's Trill,"* played by YEHUDI MENUHIN with piano accompaniments by ARTHUR BALSAM (3 sides); and KREISLER: *Recitative and Scherzo-Caprice* (for unaccompanied violin), Op. 6, played by YEHUDI MENUHIN (1 side). IMPORTED H. M. V. 2 twelve-inch records (DB-1786 and DB-1787). List price \$5.00.

I imagine that the "Devil's Trill" sonata has survived largely by reason of its name and the story of its genesis: Tartini having dreamed that he heard the Devil fiddling attempted to reproduce the performance on awakening with somewhat less than the proper diabolical skill. The work was recorded several times in the early days of the electrical era, but the other performances were not up to Menuhin's and naturally the recording here is vastly superior. Menuhin fiddles broadly and skillfully here, but I miss the imaginative fire that lights his

Timely Suggestions of Victor Recorded Music

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| <i>Symphony No. 1</i> (Szostakowicz, Op. 10) | Stokowski—Philadelphia Orchestra |
| <i>Rosenkavalier</i> (Strauss) | Lehmann, Oszewska, Schumann, Mayr, |
| (Selected Passages) | and the Vienna Philharmonic Orch. |
| | conducted by Robert Heger |
| <i>Meistersinger—Das schöne Fest</i> (Pogner's Address, Act 1) | Alexander Kipnis |
| <i>La vague et la cloche</i> } | |
| <i>Phidylé</i> } (Duparc) | Charles Panzera with Orchestra |
| <i>Quartet in G Major</i> (Dvôrák) | The Prague String Quartet |
| <i>Don Quixote</i> (Strauss) | Sir Thomas Beecham—Philharmonic Symphony |
| | Orchestra of New York |
| <i>Concerto for Two Violins</i> (Bach) | Menuhin and Georges Enesco |
| <i>Presto—Passionato</i> (Schumann) | Vladimir Horowitz |
| <i>Tannhäuser—Overture and Venusberg Music</i> | Stokowski—Philadelphia Orchestra |
| (Wagner) | |
| <i>Sonata in B Flat Minor</i> (Chopin) | Sergei Rachmaninoff |



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more recent phonographic works. However, not a great deal can be done with the rather empty music, by no means Tartini's best. On the odd record side Menuhin, unaccompanied, plays a Kreisler *konzertstück* that is merely pretentious and shallow fiddle-sticks.

* * *

TOCHAIKOWSKY (arr. WILLOUGHBY): *Andante Cantabile* from the Quartet in D major, Op. 11, played by the J. H. SQUIRE CELESTE OCTET. COLUMBIA ten-inch record (2889-D). List price 75c.

The perennial *Andante Cantabile* has been an unaccountable stranger to record lists of late. Here it is done by Squire's British salon ensemble with ample if not excessive sentimentality. Recording and performance are just routine.

* * *

WOLF: *Italian Serenade*, in G major, played by the BUDAPEST STRING QUARTET (ROISMANN—SCHNEIDER—IPOLYI—SCHNEIDER). IMPORTED H. M. V. ten-inch record (DA-1304). List price \$1.85.

There have been earlier recordings of Wolf's blithesome *Italian Serenade* (one of them in the chamber orchestral arrangement), and another string quartet version, by the Léners, appeared simultaneously with this by the Budapest four in England. But the present version is easily the best of them all, both for the buoyant and deft playing, and the bright open qualities of the recording. A good encore disc after a hearing of one of the Wolf *Lieder* society albums.

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PIANO

BEETHOVEN: *Sonatas in A major*, Op. 2, No. 2; *C sharp minor* ("Moonlight"), Op. 27, No. 2; and *E flat major* ("Das Lebewohl"), Op. 81a, played by ARTUR SCHNABEL. BEETHOVEN SONATA SOCIETY: Volume 4 (7 twelve-inch H. M. V. records). Subscription price, including album, \$17.50.

Earlier volumes of the Beethoven Sonata Society have been reviewed in the *MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE* as follows: Volume 1, September 1932; Volume 2, March 1933; Volume 3, October 1933. The present volume is just a trifle disappointing in its choice of contents. One had been prepared for the inevitable "Moonlight", but many subscribers to the series had hoped that its appearance would be postponed, at least until the long-awaited "Hammerklavier" were made available. However, if the music here is of somewhat less interest than that of the other volumes, each of which contained one of the last sonatas, the performances and recordings are no less distinguished by Schnabel's craftsmanly technique, his penetrating sense of logic and design, and his moving if chaste sense of poetry. It is a particular pleasure to have the so-called "Moonlight" sonata recorded in so simple and unaffected a performance, to add the gracious if somewhat formal second sonata

to the recorded lists, and to have a new version of "*Das Lebewohl*" that throws new light upon an old favorite. There are other good recorded performances (by Godowsky for Columbia, Kempff for Brunswick-Polydor, and probably others), but this by Schnabel will undoubtedly—and justly—be preferred for the merits of both reading and recording.

* * *

REHBERG: *Fantasy on a Theme by Verdi*, played by WALTER REHBERG. IMPORTED POLYDOR 2 ten-inch records (24996 and 25063). List price \$1.50 each.

Rehberg's piano studies on the theme of the *Miserere* from *Il Trovatore* include: 1) Theme, 2) Scherzo, 3) Idyll (record No. 24996), 4) Marche grotesque, 5) Elegie, 6) Valse (record No. 25063). The music is that of a clever concert pianist writing in semi-modern idiom, frequently quite interesting, ever rally important. Most striking is the *Marche grotesque*. However, the work is valuable as a study in the working out of variations utilizing most of the resources of modern keyboard technique. The recording seems very effective, and the playing is assured and brilliant.

* * *

SCHUMANN: *Presto-Passionata*, Op. 22 (appendix), played by VLADIMIR HOROWITZ. VICTOR ten-inch record (1638). List price \$1.50.

Reviewed from the imported pressings in the July 1933 *MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE*. This presto was originally intended by Schumann for the last movement of his G minor sonata, Op. 22. However a new finale was composed and this piece was published independently as an *anhang* or appendix to Op. 22. It is an energetic little toccata, admirably suitable for Horowitz's vigorous, almost brusque performance, for its strength and point would be entirely lost in a more fluid and expressive (so-called Schumannesque) reading. The recording is strong and effective.

* * *

RAVEL: *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, played by MADELEINE DE VALMALETE. IMPORTED POLYDOR 2 ten-inch and 1 twelve-inch records (522.754, 522.755, and 516.577). List price, complete, \$5.00.

No. 522.754: *Prélude* and *Fugue*.

No. 522.755: *Rigaudon* and *Menuet*.

No. 516.577 (12"): *Forlane* and *Toccata*.

Most American record collectors and concert goers are familiar with Ravel's orchestral version of the *Tombeau de Couperin* suite (conducted by Coppola for Victor, and others), but few except piano students know the original version of the suite, written for piano solo. The piano version (1914) contains two movements, the *Fugue* and *Toccata*, omitted in the orchestral arrangement (1919). Several individual numbers from the piano suite have been recorded before, but this is the first complete phonographic version, and it is an admirable one, both for the delicacy and incisiveness of the play-

ing, and the quality of the recording. The music itself is one of Ravel's minor works, but despite its lightness it possesses a piquant grace and dainty vitality that redeem it from preciousness.

* * *

BACH: *Sonata in E flat major*, for two pianos, played by ETHEL BARTLETT and RAE ROBERTSON. IMPORTED H. M. V. twelve-inch record (C-2614). List price \$1.90.

This is one of the most attractive two-piano records I have heard. Unfortunately the labelling is too reticent about identifying the music exactly. Undoubtedly this is the sonata in E flat written for organ. The transcriber's name is not given. But at any rate the work consists of a cheerfully energetic allegro, a graceful and songful andante or allegretto, and a light-hearted finale. The playing here (and the music is truly heart-warming, a quality rare in piano records—except those by Myra Hess and Kathleen Long, or of course Edwin Fischer.

* * *

JOHANN STRAUSS (arr. PAVIA): *Concert Paraphrase on Themes from "Die Fledermaus"* for two pianos, played by ETHEL BARTLETT and RAE ROBERTSON. IMPORTED H. M. V. twelve-inch record (C-2613). List price \$1.90.

The current appearances of the Bartlett-Robertson two-piano team lends special interest to this and the following discs, the

first recordings from them that I have heard for some time. The *Fledermaus* paraphrase is not taken too pretentiously, but the inevitable virtuoso ornamentation is there, wisely reserved until toward the end. The playing is skillful, but the somewhat brittle quality of tone is not enriched by the otherwise effective recording.

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COUPERIN: *Tic, Tic, Choc* (or *Les Maillottins*), and MOZART: *Sonata in A major—Rondo alla Turca*, played by LUCIE CAFFARET. IMPORTED POLYDOR ten-inch record (90013). List price \$1.50.

An older release from the Polydor catalogue that promises well, but hardly lives up to its promise. Caffaret's performance of the superbly animated Couperin piece is inferior to Kathleen Long's for N. G. S. and the recording is much poorer. The familiar Mozart Turkish March is played with great vigor and vivacity.

* * *

RAVEL: *Sonatine* (3 sides), and DEBUSSY: *La Puerta del Vino* (1 side), played by FRANZ JOSEF HIET. IMPORTED H. M. V. 2 ten-inch records (B-4127 and B-4128). List price \$2.70.

Unfortunately I do not have a score of the sonatine at hand as I strongly suspect that this performance must be considerably cut. The earlier versions by Kathleen Long (N. G. S.) and Alfred Cortot (H. M. V.)

Columbia MASTERWORKS* Series

FOR MARCH

Masterworks Set No. 190—MENDELSSOHN: CONCERTO IN E MINOR, OP. 64, for Violin and Orchestra. By Joseph Szigeti and London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. In 7 parts, on 4 twelve-inch records. \$6.00 with album.

Mendelssohn's one and only violin concerto remains today the best known and best liked of all compositions in this category. The stimulating finale in particular exerts a perennial charm. This new recording by Szigeti presents a brilliant, forceful interpretation and represents the last word in recording efficiency. Sir Thomas Beecham's musical genius shines through the entire performance.

BALAKIREV: *Russia*—SYMPHONIC POEM. Sir Hamilton Harty and London Philharmonic Orchestra. In 4 parts, on 2 ten-inch records, No. 17031-D and 17032-D. \$1.00 each.

The recording of the symphonic poem "Russia" is and has been for some time the record sensation of Europe. Its astonishing qualities are due to new developments in Columbia recording processes. London and Manchester newspapers headlined it as "New Triumph for the Gramophone," "Gramophone record discovery . . . would make history," etc. It is unmistakably a milestone in the annals of recording. The composition was written in 1862 by Balakirev to celebrate the 1000th anniversary of the Russian nation.

MOZART: *Quartet in F Major*, for Oboe, Violin, Viola, Violoncello (K.370). By Leon Goossens (Oboe); Jeno Lener (Violin); S Roth (Viola); I. Hartman ('Cello). In 4 parts, on 2 twelve-inch records, No. 68157-D and 68158-D. \$1.50 each.

Of Mozart's thirty quartets the Oboe Quartet was the last written, and it is safe to say that none of its predecessors possess such entrancing melodiousness and virility. It is performed only on the rarest occasions and requires an exceptional oboe soloist, which it now finds in Leon Goossens. The string performance by members of the celebrated Lener Quartet is unusual even for these great players.



"Magic Notes"

COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH & RADIO CO.
BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT

* Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.



"Magic Notes"

each took three twelve-inch sides. Hirt plays ably, but with rather obvious choice of nuances, and little atmospheric quality. His straight-forward style is hardly suited to either the gracious little Ravel work or the Debussy miniature. The recording is clear and strong.

* * *

DOHNANYI: *Rhapsody No. 3 in C*, and LISZT: *Au bord d'une source*, played by MARK HAMBOURG. IMPORTED H. M. V. twelve-inch record (C-2600). List price \$1.90.

I seldom find anything to admire in Hambourg's records. He is a typical piano virtuoso of the old school, very shaky indeed when it comes to solid musicianship. The Liszt performance here is a characteristic bit of shallow brilliance. The Dohnanyi piece on the other side is a less hackneyed choice; one of the rare bits of originality in selecting music that I have ever known Hambourg to display on records. It is an ingenious, attractive, and effective concert piece, but unfortunately Hambourg plays it as if he were still playing Liszt. The Rhapsody deserves better treatment, but even in the present performance it will probably be well liked.

* * *

SCHUMANN: *Adante and Variations* (for two pianos), Op. 46, played by MARK and MICHAL HAMBOURG. IMPORTED H. M. V. twelve-inch record (C-2634). List price \$1.90.

Schumann's Op. 46, an Andante and Variations, was originally cast for two pianos, two cellos, and French horn. Luckily the strings and horn were discarded for the published version. The music is sweetly sentimental, yet with a rather haunting expressiveness (if one can still stand this type of romanticism); with the other instruments it would have been unbearably rich. Mark Hambourg and his daughter Michal play it with tender graciousness, and practically none of the eccentricities and looseness of phrasing that usually mark the Hambourg records. The recording is fairly good; not exceptional.

* * *

VIOLIN

FALLA (arr. KREISLER): *Spanish Dance No. 1* (from *La vida breve*), DEBUSSY (arr. HARTMAN): *Minstrels*, and RIMSKY-KORSAKOW (arr. HARTMAN): *Flight of the Bumble Bee*, played by YEHUDI MENUHIN with piano accompaniments by ARTHUR BALSAM. IMPORTED H. M. V. ten-inch record (DA-1280). List Price \$1.85.

Menuhin fiddles persuasively in the Spanish Dance, but no violin arrangement can catch the superb vitality and exuberance of the original orchestral version, and Menuhin makes little effort to try to do so. The other pieces are likewise transcriptions, and in no wise up to the originals, although Menuhin does his best with a snappy performance of *Minstrels* and a deftly fleet reading of the too familiar *Bumble Bee*. The recording seems quite good.

ECCLES (arr J. SALMON): *Sonata*, played by JACQUES THIBAUD with piano accompaniments by TASSO JANOPOULO. IMPORTED H. M. V. ten-inch record (DA-1184). List price \$1.85.

I presume that this is the same Henry Eccles sonata also recorded by Franscatti for French Columbia. It is gracious and sturdy old music in the style of Corelli played with silken but strong tone by Thibaud and clearly recorded.

* * *

OPERA

RICHARD STRAUSS: *Der Rosenkavalier*, opera in three acts (slightly abridged), sung in German by ELISABETH SCHUMANN, LOTTE LEHMANN, MARIA OLCZEWSKA, RICHARD MAYR, etc., with the VIENNA STATE OPERA COMPANY CHORUS and ORCHESTRA conducted by ROBERT HEGGER. VICTOR Masterpiece Set M-196 (15 twelve-inch records). List price, including album, \$26.00.

This first large-scale recording of *Der Rosenkavalier* was briefly reviewed from the imported pressings in last month's MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE, and is the subject of a more detailed study by Dr. J. E. S. Vojan published as an article elsewhere in the present issue.

* * *

WAGNER: *Die Meistersinger*—"Das schöne Fest, Johannistag" (Ansprache des Pogner, Act 1), sung in German by ALEXANDER KIPNIS; and RICHARD STRAUSS: *Der Rosenkavalier*—"Herr Kavalier" (Letter Scene and Waltz, Finale, Act 2), sung in German by E. RUZICKA and ALEXANDER KIPNIS with the BERLIN STATE OPERA ORCHESTRA conducted by ERICH ORTHMANN. VICTOR twelve-inch record (7894). List price \$2.00.

A welcome American issue of one of Kipnis' finest records. The recording was made some two years ago, but is full and strong, and reveals Kipnis in magnificent voice, both in the lyrical address by Pogner from the first act of *Die Meistersinger* (probably the best recorded performance of this noble bass air), and the letter scene and waltz from *Der Rosenkavalier*—one of the opera's most popular scenes, with Annini reading Mariandel's letter to Ochs against an enchanting orchestral background of the familiar *Rosenkavalier* "waltzes."

* * *

BELLINI: *La Sonnambula*—"Ah! non credea mirati" (Act 3), and VERDI: *Falstaff*—"Sul fil d'un soffio esteso" (Act 3), sung in Italian by TOTI DAL MONTE with LA SCALA ORCHESTRA and CHORUS, MILAN, conducted by CARLO SABAJNO. IMPORTED H. M. V. twelve-inch record (DB-1317). List price \$2.50.

Recorded examples of Miss dal Monte's exquisite singing have been far too infrequent of late. The present disc is one of the very best she has made. She is beautifully recorded and La Scala orchestra and chorus, under Sabjno, give one of their most finished supporting performances.

RICHARD STRAUSS: *Ariadne auf Naxos*—Recitative and Aria of Zerbinetta, "All powerful Princess," sung in German by MARIA IVOGUEN, accompanied by the BERLIN STATE OPERA ORCHESTRA conducted by LEO BLECH. IMPORTED H. M. V. twelve-inch record (DB-4405). List price \$2.50.

Although released about a year ago, it was impossible to import this disc until recently when a number of copyright agreements were made with the B. I. E. M. Zerbinetta's graceful but extremely florid and difficult aria from Strauss' one-act opera, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, is just about the most virtuoso coloratura writing of modern times. Few singers could cope even with the notes themselves, to say nothing of singing with the lighthearted spirit the air requires. Mme. Ivoguen does a superb performance, one of the most striking vocal *tours de force* in recorded form. The recording and accompaniment are good, but it is the dazzling singing that makes this disc exceptional.

* * *

GINER: *Eterno Genitor*—"Plegaria," and GINER: *El Fantasma*—*Romanza de Tenor* (Act 2), sung in Spanish by JUAN GARCIA with orchestral accompaniments conducted by ESTELA. IMPORTED PARLOPHONE twelve-inch record (55.506). List price \$2.00.

Two lyrical and pretty sentimental cavatinas sung with attractively clean and ringing tone by a tenor new to me. The accompaniments seem unduly subdued, but the recording is clear and despite the considerable volume of the soloist's tone, not overpowerful.

* * *

SONGS

WOLF: *Seventeen Songs*, sung in German by ALEXANDER KIPNIS, ALEXANDRA TRIANTI, and GERARD HUESCH, with piano accompaniments by COENRAAD VAN BOS. HUGO WOLF SOCIETY: Volume 3 (6 twelve-inch H. M. V. records). List price, including album, \$15.00.

Kipnis sings three of the Michelangelo *Lieder*: *Wohl denk' ich oft, Alles endet, was entstehet*, and *Fühlt meine Seele*; one Mörike *lied*: *Um Mitternacht*; and one Goethe *lied*: *Grenzen der Menschheit*.

Trianti sings two Mörike *Lieder*: *Erstes Liebeslied eines Mädchens* and *Nixe Binsefuss*; four songs from the Spanish Songbook: *Mögen alle bösen Zungen, Köpfchen, Köpfchen, Klinge, klinge, mein Pandero*, and *Bitt' ihn, o Mutter*; and three from the Italian Songbook: *Wer rief dich denn? Mein Liebster hat zu Tische mich geladen*, and *Schweig' einmal still*.

Hüsch sings three more Italian Songbook *Lieder*: *Benedeit die sel'ge Mutter, Der Mond hat eine schwere Klag' erhoben*, and *Schon streckt' ich aus im Bett die Müden glieder*.

The first volume of the Wolf Society (now out of print) and the second (still obtainable, I believe) were reviewed on page 216 of the March 1933 issue of the MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE. The third volume,

unlike the second which was devoted entirely to Goethe songs, covers a considerable range of the Wolf repertory from the Mörike songs of 1888 to the Michelangelo songs (the last Wolf was to write) of 1897. There are happy contrasts in mood obtained here among the gay or ironic pieces sung by Trianti, the heartfelt invocations and laments sung by Hüsch, and the philosophical, introspective, and tragic *Lieder* given to Kipnis. The Michelangelo songs, with their searching and profound pessimism are probably the high lights of the set, and while Kipnis does not sing quite as vitally as Hüsch (who vocally is outstanding here) his performances realize admirably the breadth and pathos of these miniature but concentrated tragic dramas. Miss Trianti does not impress me quite as favorably as in the second volume. Her interpretations have the proper intensely sardonic bite, and feverish gaiety, but her voice is unpleasantly thin and lacking in color at times. However one should be grateful for the songs she does, several of which are among Wolf's very best creations in lighter vein. The outstanding impression one gets from this set is the astounding modernity of these songs. Unlike the Schubert *Winterreise* (reviewed last month) time has not made them alien to the modern mind. Their poignance, their razor-edged pointedness, intense concentration, and severe economy of means are more keenly effective than ever. One cannot listen to these songs and not be deeply moved, but the edges of the sentiment are hard and sharp, while from a craftsman's point of view each song is a superbly skillful chiselled or etched work of genuine art. Music like this is peculiarly adapted to the phonograph; on the rare occasions when it may be heard in concert its outlines are too often dulled or smudged.

I should add a word of praise for Coenraad van Bos whose immaculate artistry is again revealed brilliantly, and Ernest Newman whose "Note on Wolf as a Craftsman" displays real insight: a brief but concentrated bit of music criticism of the finest sort. The accompanying booklet also contains the German text, and English prose translation, and short analysis of the various songs. It should also be noted that—to the best of my knowledge—none of the songs in this third volume has been recorded before.

* * *

GRIEG: *Med en vandlilje*, and FAURE: *Dans les ruines d'une Abbaye* (No. DA-1324); KOECHLIN: *L'Hiver*, GEORGES: *La Pluie*, and TCHAIKOWSKY: *Pendant le bal* (No. DA-1325), sung in French (except for the Grieg song which is sung in Norwegian) by POVLA FRIJSH with piano accompaniments by ELOF NIELSON. IMPORTED H. M. V. 2 ten-inch records. List price \$1.85 each.

Miss Frijsh's first record (songs by Kricka, Grieg, and Schubert) was reviewed on page 120 of the December 1933 MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE. It is good to have more records of

this admirable Scandinavian soprano, for there are few recording singers who can surpass her command of a sustained pianissimo or *mezza voce* legato, or her delicacy and charm. For all (or perhaps because of) the exquisite restraint of her singing, it records superbly, and every one of the Frijsch discs should be known to every *Lieder* collector. Here she sings Grieg's dainty *Water Lily* (very different from MacDowell's), a lilting chanson by Gabriel Fauré, a simple but extremely effective song by Koechlin, a rather colorless air by Georges, and Tchaikowsky's graceful but pretty inconsequential *Pendant le bal*. For the most part the songs themselves do not amount to a great deal, but the sensitive performances and the enchanting tonal qualities give these discs real significance.

* * *

SCHUBERT: *Der Erlkönig*, and SCHUMANN: *Ich grolle nicht*, sung in German by LOTTE LEHMANN with piano and chamber orchestral accompaniments respectively. COLUMBIA ten-inch record (4092-M). List price \$1.00.

Despite the fact that Mme. Lehmann is in lovely voice here, this is not one of her best *Lieder* discs. The *Erlkönig* is taken at a pretty fast clip and lacks dramatic power; the Schumann song is sung very lyrically. The interpretations are certainly individual and unorthodox, but I cannot call them effective. Both songs should be sung by men anyway. The recording doesn't seem of recent vintage: the voice comes through well, but the piano in *Der Erlkönig* is reproduced very tinnily.

* * *

WOODFORD-FINDEN: *Indian Love Lyrics*—No. 3, "*Kashmiri Song*," and No. 4, "*Till I Wake*," sung in English by CONRAD TRIBAULT with piano accompaniments by THEODORE WALSTRUM. VICTOR ten-inch record (1636). List price \$1.50.

Thibault recorded the first two *Indian Love Lyrics* on Victor 1626 (reviewed in the June 1933 MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE), and now completes the set. The *Kashmiri Song* is the familiar "*Pale Hands I Loved*." Thibault sings with pleasant tone qualities and reasonable restraint—considering the emotionalization so closely associated with these salon *meisterwerke*. The recording seems very good, but the disc is likely to appeal strongly only to the great radio public.

* * *

DUPARC: *La vague et la cloche* and *Phidylé*, sung in French by CHARLES PANZÉRA with orchestral accompaniments conducted by PIERO COPPOLA. VICTOR twelve-inch record (11647). List price \$1.50.

It is a pleasant surprise to find Victor repressing this fine disc, for both Panzéra and Duparc are represented far too scantily in American catalogues. These two songs were reviewed from the imported pressings in the November 1933 MUSIC LOVERS' GUIDE. The songs are magnificent ones, large in scope, and given sensitive and dramatic perform-

ances by the ever admirable Panzéra. The orchestral accompaniments directed in equally musicianly fashion by Coppola.

* * *

BELLINI: *Mu! . . . Mu!*, and RIMSKY-KORSAKOW: *Aimant la rose, le rossignol*, sung in Italian and French respectively by TITO SCHIPA with orchestral accompaniments conducted by SEMPRINI and SABAJNO respectively. IMPORTED H. M. V. ten-inch record (DA-1323). List price \$1.85.

This Bellini is not that Bellini, but an Italian contemporary composer of jazzy songs, of which "*Mu! . . . Mu!*" is a very happy and catchy example. Schipa does it with great verve and delicacy; Tauber himself could not have beaten this performance. The other side of the disc contains—incongruously—Rimsky's doleful, pseudo-exotic "*Aimant la rose*," also sung and recorded effectively. But the *Moo, Moo* side is the prime attraction, and the tune is likely to develop into a hit over here.

* * *

IBERT: *Don Quixote—Chanson du Duc, Chanson du Départ, Chanson à Dulcinée*, and *Mort de Don Quichotte*, sung in French by THEODOR CHALIAPIN, with orchestral accompaniments conducted by JACQUES IBERT. IMPORTED H. M. V. 2 ten-inch records (DA-1310 and record (DA-4402). List price \$1.85.

The songs on the two discs are from Chaliapin's film, *Don Quixote* (not yet released in this country) for which Jacques Ibert (of *Petit âne blanc* fame) wrote the music. I was not particularly impressed with them on casual hearing, but they seem to grow on one and I can easily imagine that with Chaliapin himself before one's eyes in the film they are immensely effective. The idiom is but mildly modern and Ibert has drawn heavily on what seem to me to be authentic Spanish folk rhythms and melodic turns. They are skillfully constructed and scored, with happy use of the harpsichord in the *Duke's Song*. The *Dream of Dulcinia* is perhaps the most effective air in the group and one can picture Chaliapin doing a magnificent job of it and the inevitable death music. This may not be music to rank with Strauss' on the same subject, but for me it is more effective than Massenet's, and certainly of uncommon high grade for the movies. The performances are excellent, the recording satisfactory.

* * *

GERMAN AND HUNGARIAN FOLK SONGS: *O, du liabs Aengeli, Z' Lauterbach hab' i mein Strumpf verlor'n, Gsatzli*, and *Maria auf dem Berge*, sung in German by MARIA IVOGUEN with piano accompaniments by MICHAEL RAUCHEISEN. IMPORTED H. M. V. ten-inch DA-1311). List price \$1.85 each.

Mme. Ivogün's other records are almost exclusively devoted to exceedingly virtuoso coloratura arias. It seems odd to hear her in these simple folk songs in dialect, but surprisingly enough she does them equally successfully, although of course in very different fashion. Her singing here has a

complete lack of affectation or pretentiousness, and the naïve ornamentations of these charming tunes is executed with uncanny delicacy and absence of effort. Any one with a weakness for German folk song will fall easy prey to this disc. Some of the songs may be Hungarian, but even these are Germanic in type, and undoubtedly no relation to the true Hungarian (Maygar) folk songs with which Bartok and Kodaly have done so much exploratory work.

* * *

OPERETTA

SULLIVAN: *The Sorcerer*—Abridged Version, recorded under the direction of RUPERT D'OYLY CARTE. IMPORTED H. M. V. album set No. 193 (6 ten-inch records). List price, including album and libretto, \$8.10.

THE CAST

Sir Marmaduke Pointdextre Darrell Fancourt
Alexis.....Derek Oldham
Dr. Daly.....Leslie Randa
Notary.....Stuart Robertson
John Wellington Wells.....George Baker
Lady Sangazure.....Dorothy Gill
Aline.....Muriel Dickson
Mrs. Partlet.....Anna Bethell
Constance.....Alice Moxon
Conductor.....Isodore Godfrey

The Sorcerer was first produced in 1877, two years after *Trial by Jury*. It was the first production of the syndicate headed by the late Richard D'Oyle Carte, which (under the present leadership of Rupert D'Oyle Carte) still remains the fountain-head of the G. & S. tradition. Though the touch of both lyricist and composer is less sure and brilliant here than in the latter products of their collaboration, there is more than a modicum of verse and music here of pure Gilbert & Sullivan gold. The work does not deserve its neglect, and the present recording may help to make it better known. It is unfortunate, however, that the set could not have been made longer, and performed and recorded with greater care. The recording while fairly effective is marred by several lapses from the best standards; the orchestra seems unduly small; and one misses the marvellous precision and brilliancy of both solo and ensemble numbers in some of the early D'Oyle Carte recordings. Outstanding in the cast are George Baker (whose "My name is John Wellington Wells" is a superb patter song). Derek Oldham, Stuart Robertson, and Muriel Dickson (who does well with the elaborate air of Aline, "Oh happy young heart").

* * *

SCHUBERT-BERTÉ: *Das Dreimäderlhaus*—"Zu jeder Zeit" and "Nicht klagen," sung in German by RICHARD TAUBER with orchestral accompaniments. COLUMBIA ten-inch record (G4093-M). List price \$1.00.

Das Dreimäderlhaus is the Berté operetta based on Schubert melodies, better known in this country by its English title, *Lilac*

Time. This is apt material for Tauber, but he seems not in the very best of his voice (a rare occurrence with him), and while *Nicht klagen* is deftly done, *Zu jeder Zeit* contains some of the very infrequent examples of coarseness and tone-forcing that one will find in Tauber's immense recorded repertory. However, the fault may be partly that of the recording which is rather rough and over-amplified.

* * *

LIGHT ORCHESTRAL

LEHMBERG: *Granada Suite*—"Albaicin", "Generalife", "Sacro-Monte", and "Fiesta", played by the ORQUESTA IBERICA DE MADRID conducted by GERMAN LAGO. IMPORTED ODEON ten-inch record (203,423). List price \$1.25.

I imagine this is authentic enough Spanish music, but its constantly reiterated rhythms and melodic turns tend to become a little monotonous to a non-Iberian. It is played, by an orchestra that seems to be made up entirely of plucked instruments, with great verve, and the recording is strong and clear. Anyone interested in genuine Spanish music should find the disc well worth examination.

* * *

MISCELLANEOUS

Shakespearean Recitations

SHAKESPEARE: *Hamlet*—"To be, or not to be" (Act 3, Scene 1), and "O, that this too too solid flesh" (Act 1, Scene 2) (Victor No. 4248); "How all Occasions" (Act 4, Scene 4), and "Look here, upon this picture" (Act 3, Scene 3) (Victor 4249). Recited in English by HENRY AINLEY. Victor 2 ten-inch records. List price \$1.00 each.

Recorded readings of Shakespearean passages apparently are in occasional demand, particularly in schools. Victor already has several discs of this sort in its catalogue and only the number—not the interest—is increased by the present two additions. Henry Ainley, a British actor, enunciates cleanly enough, but his performances are dull, sententious, and dramatically ineffective. The recording is amply clear.

* * *

POPULAR VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL

Columbia brings out "exclusive songs" by the *Yacht Club Boys*, favorite Broadway night club entertainers, *We Own a Salon*, side lights on the beauty salon business, and *The Super-Special Picture of the Year*, publicity blurbs in song for a new Lubitsch film (Columbia 2887-D). The music and cracks are peppy, but the humor is spread a bit thinly. Victor's entertainment disc is intended for a strictly juvenile audience, a quasi-broadcast presentation of a fairy tale, *The Twelve Dancing Princesses*, acted out

with incidental music by the *Wonderland Players* (Victor 24553). Children may like it as a repeatable (ad nauseam) radio program. Brunswick re-lists two of *Ethel Waters*'s finest performances, originally issued as part of the *Blackbirds* album, now coupled on a single record: *I Can't Give You Anything But Love*, and *Porgy*, neither of which is to be missed. *Duke Ellington* provides the accompaniments (Brunswick 6758). Two vocalists are reviewed under *Show Hits*: *Ramona* in a tune from "Nana" and *Ruth Etting* in airs from "Hips Hips Hooray." The only remaining no-show vocal disc is Brunswick 6754, whereon *Connie Boswell* warbles *In Other Words We're Through* and *I Had to Change the Words*. The only instrumental disc, *Joe Sullivan*'s hot piano solos, is reviewed under *Hot Jazz*.

* * *

SHOW HITS

FLYING DOWN TO RIO: A rumba, *Carioca*, from this film has already jumped into the lead of the best selling popular records. Four versions have appeared to date, by *Madriguera* (Columbia 2885-D), *Castilian Troubadours* (Brunswick 6749), *Sosnik* (Victor 24488), and *Nat Finston's* RKO Studio orchestra (Victor 24515). The last-named disc is the best from a recording point of view, but honors for the best performance are divided between *Madriguera's* orchestra and the *Castilian Troubadours*. The former gives the most interesting version, very crisp and highly spiced with Spanish sauces, but I doubt that it's as good for dancing (except for rumba virtuosos) as the more smoothly played and seductively rhythmical *Castilian* version. *Orchids in the Moonlight*, a tango, is played by the *Castilians* on the other side of Brunswick 6749, and by *Madriguera* on the other side of Columbia 2885-D, both with pretty penetrating tone. *Rudy Vallée* provides a blander version on Victor 24459, coupled with the title song. Another tune from the same show, *Music Makes Me*, is done by *Emil Coleman* on Columbia 2893-D (with *In a Shelter from a Shower*), and *Abe Lyman* on Brunswick 6756 (with *Jimmie Had a Nickel*); the former excels in tone qualities, the latter in peppiness.

BOLERO: The hit tune here is the highly seductive *Raftero*, named after the star of the film, *George Raft*. It is played by *Nat Finston's* orchestra in a very ingeniously scored version (symphonic salon style) on the other side of the *Carioca* disc mentioned above (Victor 24515). Recommended.

WONDER BAR: The first excerpts from *Al Jolson's* new film are *Goin' to Heaven on a Mule* and *Don't Say Goodnight*, both done by *Gus Arnheim* (Brunswick 6751) and *Rudy Vallée* (Victor 24554). The Victor version of *Goin' to Heaven* is mostly *Rudy's* vocalization, in hill-billy rhythmic spiritual style; *Arnheim's* performance is more ingeniously scored and varied for dancing. Neither can

do much with the rather dull *Don't Say Goodnight*, but *Vallée* gives it a smoother swing.

NEW ZIEGFELD FOLLIES: *Wagon Wheels* (a rather feeble bid for *Last Round Up* honors) appears this month in three performances, by *George Olsen* (Columbia 2881-D), *Paul Whiteman* (Victor 24517), and *Abe Lyman* (Brunswick 6759). *Olsen* with *Last Round Up Joe Morrison* doing the vocals gets the best back-country atmosphere, but *Whiteman's* subdued but songful version is more attractive and danceable. *Lyman's* performance strives for originality, but only succeeds in being rather choppy. The most amusing coupling is *Olsen's* a meller-drammer, *You're in My Power*, Ha! Ha! a catchy tune with villainous doings by *Bob Rice* and poor heroine's wailing by *Ethel Shutta*, and a surprising Westian reversal of the roles. On the other side of Brunswick 6759 *Lyman* plays sonorously songful *I Can't Go On Like This*, while *Whiteman's* coupling is a very sweet semi-symphonic performance of *If I Love Again* from "Hold Your Horses"—a rather silly but very ingratiating tune.

EIGHT GIRLS IN A BOAT: The plugged tune here probably derives from the *Big Bad Wolf*—*This Little Piggie Went to Market*, but it's a straighter dance air than the title would lead one to imagine. *Victor Young* does it deftly on Brunswick 6747; *George Olsen* takes it very much slower and sentimentally on Columbia 2878-D; and *Eddie Duchin* tries not too successfully to combine straight play-in with baby-parade tinkle tricks. *Young's* coupling is from the same show, *A Day Without You*, a rather colorless tune, but as played here, quite danceable. On the other side of the Columbia disc *Olsen* plays an attractive version of *In Other Words We're Through*, and on the other side of the Victor disc *Duchin* does a songful but well rhythmical performance of *If I Didn't Care*.

NANA and SOCIAL REGISTER: *Ramona* does a grand vocalization of *Anna Sten's* song, *That's Love* (Victor 24520), a rather ordinary torch song, but very skillfully put across, with some neat pianoing on the side. *Ramona* also does *Why Not?* from the film, "Social Register," an archer and more ingratiating tune, sung in very delicate and subdued fashion, but with some clever piano work to enliven it. A nice record. The only dance version of the "Nana" song I have heard as yet is *Madriguera's* (Columbia 2888-D), a suave performance coupled with a brighter *There Goes My Heart*. I have not yet received for review the *Casa Loma* version of *That's Love*, coupled with *Lullaby in Blue* on Brunswick 6764.

MANDALAY and FASHIONS OF 1934: *Freddy Martin* does a catchy brisk performance of *When Tomorrow Comes* from the former film, and a more songful, but still spirited version of *Spin a Little Web of Dreams* from the latter (Brunswick 6760—recommended). The *Mandalay* tune is played more broadly and sonorously by *Don Bestor* (Victor 24524—with the title song from "Beloved").

HIS DOUBLE LIFE: The tunes here are Springtime in Old Granada and Some Day, songfully played by *Victor Young* on Brunswick 6731.

JOE PALOOKA and LET'S FALL IN LOVE: Later additions to the recorded excerpts of the former film include Like Me a Little Bit Less, done very pepperly by *Gus Arnheim* (Brunswick 6729) and hotly by *Clyde McCoy* (Columbia 2865-D). On the other side of the Columbia disc McCoy plays Joe Palooka, and on the other side of the Brunswick disc Arnheim does a sentimental version of Let's Fall in Love from the film of that name.

HIPS HIPS HOORAY: Brunswick is alone here this month with *Ruth Etting's* vigorous but highly intimate vocalizations of Keep Romance Alive and Tired of It All—both very strongly recorded.

CASINO DE PAREE: *Don Redman* gets plenty pep into Got the Jitters and surprising life into the duller tune, I Wanna Be Loved, on Brunswick 6745.

LITTLE WOMEN and BELOVED: *Victor Young* contributes a new version of the film-inspired (and not very inspired) Little Women, coupled with the title tune from the film "Beloved" (Brunswick 6748).

ALICE IN WONDERLAND and JIMMY AND SALLY: *Isham Jones* tackles another "inspired" air, Alice in Wonderland, coupled with a livelier You're My Thrill from "Jimmy and Sally" (Victor 24516).

STRIKE UP THE BAND and ANDERSON'S ALMANAC: Brunswick 6753 re-issues two good *Red Nichols* performances, Gershwin's spirited Strike Up the Band, and I May Be Wrong from the "Almanac."

* * *

BALLROOM DANCE DISCS

Space exigencies permit mention of only a few discs, led by several British importations. On Brunswick 6755 *Ambrose* and his orchestra play the big hit in England, Love Locked Out, coupled with a richly attractive Without That Certain Thing. *Ray Noble* is represented by a very peppy and brilliantly played martial fantasy, There's Something About a Soldier, coupled with Jack Jackson's Whistling Under the Moon (graceful and deft salon stuff) on Victor 24513. *Jack Hylton* is heard from again on Brunswick 6757 with Yvonne and Old Fashioned Sweetheart. The former is pretty slow and songful, but the latter has the breadth and brilliance of tone that has marked Hylton's best discs in the past.

BRUNSWICK: *Guy Lombardo* plays Jungle Drums (issued earlier as a special Spanish release) now coupled with *Carlos Molina's* La Comparsa de los Congos (6762). The former exotic piece is one of Lombardo's best recordings in recent years, and the latter is a catchy rumba sure to be popular. On 6730 *Anson Weeks* does a fine sturdy performance of a rousing tune, Memphis by Morning, and a dreamy Throw Another Log on the Fire.



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COLUMBIA: Honors go to *Bernie Cummins* for his catchy collegiate performance of *Alice from Dallas*, coupled with *Clyde McCoy's* subdued but hot *Business on the Q T* (2874-D); and *Emil Coleman's* suave society versions of two popular British tunes, *I Was in the Mood* and *Without That Certain Thing* (2882-D). VICTOR: *Isham Jones* does a grand version of a new and different tune, *Junk Man*, coupled with a sonorously songful *There Goes My Heart* (24519); and *Eddie Duchin* contributed two stylized but attractive tunes, *I Was in The Mood* and *How Was I to Know* (24518).

* * *

HOT JAZZ

Eddie Condon, leading a hot band made up of both white and Negro jazzists, contributes two eccentric numbers, a slow *Home Cooking*, and a very slippery and fleet *The Eel* (Brunswick 6743). Other new hot releases on the Brunswick list are *Claude Hopkins'* aptly named *Mystic Moan* (with some strange slithery pianoing) and a fast, intricately rhythmmed *Washington Squabble* (6750—a very interesting disc); and *Frankie Trumbauer's* *Break It Down* and *Juba Dance* (6763). I am not sure whether *Nathaniel Dett* would recognize his own *Juba* here, but it certainly makes a great hot rhythmic dance piece in this ingeniously jazzed version. *Trumbauer's* own tune, *Break It Down*,

is less startling—and seems to owe a good deal to *Ellington*—but it's done with fine exuberance and snap, and makes one realize how good it is to hear from *Trumbauer* again on standard-priced discs. May he make more! Brunswick also re-lists eight *Ellington* performances, to be commented on next month: *Birmingham Breakdown* and *East St. Louis Toodle-O* (6801). *Tishimingo Blues* and *Yellow Dog Blues* (6802), *Take It Easy* and *Black Beauty* (two of the Duke's greatest) on 6803, *Soliloquy* and *Jubilee Stomp* (6804).

Victor leads off with *Jimmie Lunceford*, now at the Cotton Club, in highly incandescent versions of a high-powered jungle fantasy called *Jazznocracy* and a broadly swinging haunting *Chillen Get Up* (24522—a fine hot disc). *Cab Calloway* does his stuff in the *Scat Song*—fast and furious—and *Cabin in the Cotton*—less exciting except for Cab's insane vocalizations (24511). Besides the Brunswick re-listings mentioned above, *Ellington* is represented by one new coupling: Victor 24521, *Stomp* *Jones* and *Blue Feeling*. The former is a characteristically patternized stomp, with lots of power and motion, but less interesting than Duke's best compositions. *Blue Feeling*, however, is less raucous and formalized, a slow haunting rhapsodic tune that grows on one with every hearing. The recording is excellent.

Columbia invades the hot field this month with a vengeance, releasing a whole batch of noteworthy and sizzling discs. First comes *Joe Sullivan's* debut solo record (2876-D), coupling his own *Gin Mill Blues* with *Fats Waller's* *Honeysuckle Rose*. The former side is uncommonly interesting, one of the best examples of slow piano jazz we have had on discs for some time. The other side presents an attractive tune, ingeniously but less originally treated. On 2884-D Columbia re-lists two of the *Casa Loma's* best early performances, an excited, rather raucous, but tremendously vigorous version of the *San Sue Strut*, coupled with a broader, but strongly moving *Royal Garden Blues*. *Chick Webb's* *Savoy band* is represented on 2875-D with a revival of *On the Sunny Side of the Street*—a tune I always had a soft spot for and which is a real pleasure to hear again in this subdued but colorful version; and on 2883-D with *When Dreams Come True* and *Get Together*. The former is a sprightly treatment of a catchy tune; the latter displays some high-speed going to town in one of Webb's own tunes. But don't fail to hear the clarinet glissando, down and up, in *On the Sunny Side of the Street*. On the other side of 2875-D *Benny Carter* leads the *Chocolate Dandies* in a fine vibrant and toe-tickling performance of *I Never Knew*. Finally there is *Claude Hopkins* in a very lightly and brilliantly handled *Harlem Rhythm Dance*, coupled with a skillful and originally treated revival of a great tune, *Ain't Misbehavin'* (2880-D—a very attractive pair of hot performances). (*Benny Goodman's* *Ol' Pappy* and *Junk Man*—Columbia 2892-D—failed to reach me in time for review this month.)

Latest Arrivals In Domestic & Imported Records

Ravel: *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, complete, played by Madeleine de Valmalete. Imported Polydor 1 twelve-inch and 2 ten-inch records. Price \$5.00.

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Respighi: *Second Suite of Ancient Dances*, played by the Royal Opera Orchestra conducted by Bellazza. Victor 2 twelve-inch records. Price \$3.00.

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Johann Strauss: *Perpetuum Mobile* and *Annenska Polka*, played by the Vienna Phil-

harmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. Imported Victor ten-inch record. Price \$1.35.

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Sullivan: *The Sorcerer*—abridged version, performed by the D'Oyly Carte Company, London. Imported Victor 6 ten-inch records with album. Price \$8.10.

Weinberger: *Schwanda* — "Ich bin der Schwanda" and "Wie kann ich denn vergessen?" sung by Karl Hammes with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra and Chorus. Imported Victor ten-inch record. Price \$1.35.

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"Por no encontrarme en la calle" (Fandangos), and "Cuando yo estuve en Columbia" (Columbianas), sung by La Jerezana y La Macarena. Imported Parlophone ten-inch record. Price \$1.25.

"Al Cachorro de Triana" and *Macarena Saetas*, sung by Estrellita Castro. Imported Parlophone ten-inch record. Price \$1.25.

"Yo te abri la puerta ufano" (Fandanguillos), and "No pueden llegar a Espana" (Javeras), sung by Chato de las Ventas. Imported Parlophone ten-inch record. Price \$1.25.

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Beethoven: Die Himmel rühmen des ewigen Ehre, and Kremser: Wir treten zum Beten, sung by the Basilica Choir with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra. Polydor twelve-inch record (66560). Price \$1.50.

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